www.futuresummit.com

Future Summit
Alberta 2002

Imagine our tomorrow...

A REPORT TO THE GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

Delivered by the Future Summit Co-Chairs
and the External Advisory Committee

MAY 2002

ALBERTA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Alberta
GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

Alberta Future Summit 2002

Co-Chairs

Greg Melchin, Minister of Revenue, Government of Alberta
Doug Mitchell, Chair, Alberta Economic Development Authority

Future Summit Steering Committee

Ralph Klein, Premier of Alberta, Honourary Sponsor
Greg Melchin, Minister of Revenue, Government of Alberta; Future Summit Co-Chair
Doug Mitchell, Chair, Alberta Economic Development Authority; Future Summit Co-Chair
Patricia Nelson, Minister of Finance, Government of Alberta
Gene Zwozdesky, Minister of Community Development, Government of Alberta
Mark Norris, Minister of Economic Development, Government of Alberta

External Advisory Committee

Paul Byrne, President, Grant MacEwan College
Gary Campbell, Counsel, Miller Thompson
Fred Estlin, Past Chair, Board of Governors, Grande Prairie Regional College
Darshan Kailly, President, Canadian Freightways Ltd.
Mary LeMessurier, former Minister of Culture, Government of Alberta
Irene Lewis, President and CEO, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology
Don Lowry, President and CEO, EPCOR Utilities Inc.
Larry McNamara, President, Agri Enhancements
Eric Newell, Chairman and CEO, Syncrude Canada Ltd.
Steve Snyder, President and CEO, TransAlta Corporation
Gail Surkan, Mayor, City of Red Deer

The complete report and report highlights are available on the Future Summit website at <www.futuresummit.com>.

For additional copies of these documents, please contact:
Alberta Future Summit 2002
PO Box 1333
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2N2
Phone
310-4455 *(toll free within Alberta)*
Deaf and hearing-impaired callers with TDD may call 427-9999 in Edmonton or 1-800-232-7215 in other parts of Alberta.
Fax
(780) 422-2852
Website
<www.futuresummit.com>

ISBN 0778521176

Future Summit
Alberta 2002

Table of Contents

Imagining Our Tomorrow 1

About the Future Summit 3
About the Report 4
A Message from the Co-Chairs 6
A Message from the External Advisory Committee 8

The Landscape of the Future 11

A Vision for Alberta 13
Values and Guiding Principles 14
Trends and Issues 17

Putting It All Together 19

Interconnections 21
An Integrated Approach 28

Bold Steps 35

The Economy **39**
Background 39
Albertans' Vision 41
Obstacles 42
Opportunities 43
Guiding Principles 43
Strategies and Ideas for Action 44
What Albertans Had to Say 51

Learning **57**
Background 57
Albertans' Vision 58
Obstacles 59
Opportunities 60
Guiding Principles 61
Strategies and Ideas for Action 62
What Albertans Had to Say 69

Fiscal Responsibility **72**
Background 72
Albertans' Vision 73
Obstacles 74
Opportunities 75
Guiding Principles 76
Strategies and Ideas for Action 77
What Albertans Had to Say 85

Communities **92**
Background 92
Albertans' Vision 93
Obstacles 95
Opportunities 96
Guiding Principles 96
Strategies and Ideas for Action 97
What Albertans Had to Say 106

Health and Wellness **109**
Background 109
Albertans' Vision 110
Obstacles 111
Opportunities 112
Guiding Principles 112
Strategies and Ideas for Action 113
What Albertans Had to Say 121

The Environment **124**
Background 124
Albertans' Vision 126
Obstacles 127
Opportunities 127
Guiding Principles 128
Strategies and Ideas for Action 129
What Albertans Had to Say 137

Governance **144**
Background 144
Albertans' Vision 146
Obstacles 147
Opportunities 148
Guiding Principles 148
Strategies and Ideas for Action 149
What Albertans Had to Say 154

Appendix A 159

The Future Summit Process 161

Appendix B 167

Delegates to the Alberta Future Summit 2002 169

102-05499/

Imagining Our Tomorrow

About the Future Summit

About the Report

A Message from the Co-Chairs

A Message from the External Advisory Committee

About the Future Summit

In the April 10, 2001, Throne Speech, the government made a pledge to consult with Albertans in planning what a post-debt Alberta would look like and what the province's priorities should be. The Alberta Future Summit 2002 was the result of that promise.

The scope of the Summit was later broadened to become a discussion of Albertans' shared future. But while the focus changed, the government never wavered in its commitment to give all Albertans a voice in crafting the vision that will carry this province forward into the future.

> ***If Albertans can take any lesson from the year 2001, it is that the pursuit of excellence and the achievement of personal goals can be attained even as the sweep of history leaves profound challenges in its wake.***
>
> — Premier Ralph Klein at the opening of the Alberta Future Summit 2002
> Red Deer, Alberta, February 4, 2002

From September through December 2001, over 4,000 Albertans contributed their thoughts, ideas and insights about the future. This input built the framework for discussions at the Future Summit held in Red Deer on February 4–5, 2002. Here, 260 delegates drafted strategic directions and ideas for action for the seven areas Albertans had identified as priorities—the economy, learning, fiscal responsibility, communities, health and wellness, the environment and governance. This report and its ideas for action are a reflection of their work.

For details about the Future Summit process, please see Appendix A.

About the Report

This report represents the views and ideas of thousands of Albertans and the work of many months. It combines two sources of information:

- the public consultations (September to December 2001), during which Albertans provided input through the Summit workbook, Regional Forums and meetings hosted by MLAs
- the deliberations of delegates at the Alberta Future Summit 2002 in Red Deer, February 4–5, 2002

The report has six parts:

- Imagining Our Tomorrow
- The Landscape of the Future
- Putting It All Together
- Bold Steps
- Toward the Future
- Appendices

Imagining Our Tomorrow outlines the purpose of the Summit and the structure of the report. It also includes messages from the Summit's co-chairs and the External Advisory Committee.

The Landscape of the Future presents the vision, values and principles Albertans proposed should guide the province in planning for the future. It also introduces some of the challenges Alberta will face.

Putting It All Together discusses the interconnections between the seven Future Summit themes—the economy, learning, fiscal responsibility, communities, health and wellness, the environment and governance. These are the building blocks that define Alberta's future. The section called "An Integrated Approach" **(see p. 28)** highlights the commonalities evident in the delegates' strategies and ideas for action.

The chapter called **Bold Steps** is the heart of the report. It includes seven sections—one for each of the seven Future Summit themes. Each section of this chapter opens with background information about the theme and a summary of current challenges. This is followed by Albertans' vision for the theme. The vision material is a composite of Summit delegates' views and the input Albertans provided during the public consultations (September–December 2001).

The three subsequent topics in each theme section represent the delegates' views. The delegates' work is reflected in the discussions of:

- obstacles and opportunities
- guiding principles
- strategies and ideas for action

The final segment of each theme discussion is called "What Albertans Had to Say." This summarizes the input received over the course of Summit consultations, from September–December 2001. In many cases, Albertans' views closely matched the delegates' perceptions of the issues. In some cases, they did not. The challenge is to find an appropriate balance.

Appendix A is a summary of the Future Summit process.
Appendix B includes a list of delegates to the Alberta Future Summit 2002 in Red Deer, February 4–5, 2002.

The complete report and report highlights are available on the Future Summit website at <www.futuresummit.com>.

We must remember the past, define the future, and challenge the present—wherever and however we can.

— Jane O'Reilly, feminist, humourist and author of *The Girl I Left Behind*, 1980

A Message from the Co-Chairs

Albertans working together...

imagining our tomorrow...

That's what the Alberta Future Summit 2002 has been about.

The Future Summit has brought forward a wealth of ideas and viewpoints. While Albertans did not always agree on priorities or approaches, there is much that they hold in common. Albertans believe in self-reliance. They value a sharing, compassionate society in which all citizens benefit from the Alberta Advantage. They recognize that the issues that face the province are inextricably linked and that strategies for the future cannot be developed in isolation. Rather, an integrated, cross-sectoral approach is required.

The Future Summit was an intensive process. Since the Summit was launched in the fall of 2001, more than 4,000 Albertans completed the *Imagine Our Tomorrow* questionnaire online or in print, attended one of the 11 Regional Forums held across the province, or participated in one of the 60-plus meetings held by more than 40 Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs).

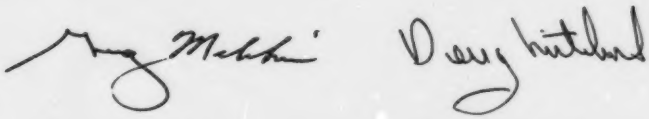
The ideas and views heard throughout these consultations built the framework for discussions at the Future Summit held in Red Deer on February 4–5, 2002. Here, 260 delegates used the input from Albertans to develop strategic directions for the province. **(A list of Summit delegates is included in Appendix B.)** This report and its ideas for action are a reflection of their work.

Planning for the future wasn't an easy task, but Albertans rose to the challenge. We extend our thanks to all the Albertans who volunteered their time and took part in the process. Through the Future Summit exercise, Alberta grew stronger as a province.

It has been a pleasure, for both of us, to serve as co-chairs of this initiative. We are honoured to present this report to the Alberta Government on behalf of the Future Summit Steering Committee, the External Advisory Committee, and especially, on behalf of the Albertans who participated.

Through the Future Summit process, Albertans proposed many strategies and ideas for building the future. It has been an exciting journey, but the work has just begun. Costs and benefits will need to be analyzed. Options and trade-offs will need to be considered. Choices will need to be made. The strategies developed at the Summit provide an excellent starting point for the work that lies ahead as Alberta steps forward, boldly, toward the future.

Premier Klein has said the Alberta Government will review and respond to these strategies. Those that are accepted will be turned into actions in the government's 2003–2006 business plan. The challenge now is for all Albertans—governments, communities, corporations and individual citizens—to work together to create a better future.



Greg Melchin
Minister of Revenue
Government of Alberta

Doug Mitchell
Chair
Alberta Economic Development Authority

Nothing ever built arose to touch the skies unless someone dreamed that it should, someone believed that it could, and someone willed that it must.

— Charles F. Kettering [adapted], engineer, inventor and philanthropist

A Message from the External Advisory Committee

The Alberta Future Summit 2002 has given Albertans a voice in crafting the vision that will carry this province forward into the future.

As the External Advisory Committee, our purpose has been to provide a nongovernment perspective throughout the Future Summit process. We are pleased to have been part of this exciting project.

Albertans are proud of their province and optimistic about the future. They have high expectations and set high standards for themselves. But Albertans also realize that expectations must be realistic and results must be achieved in a responsible manner.

The Future Summit brought forward a diversity of ideas on how Alberta should plan for its future. While Albertans have different priorities and viewpoints, the Future Summit showed—through the public consultations (September to December 2001) and the discussions in Red Deer (February 4–5, 2002)—that far more unites us than sets us apart. The challenge now is for Albertans to build on the results of the Summit and work together to create a better future.

Albertans identified seven priorities for the future—the economy, learning, fiscal responsibility, communities, health and wellness, the environment and governance. The Future Summit helped to identify the dilemmas Albertans must confront as they balance these priorities and develop strategies to deal with them. The Summit also underlined the fact that the future cannot be compartmentalized. The choices Albertans make in one sector may have profound implications for other areas.

Over the course of the Future Summit process, we heard a wealth of ideas. Some, such as developing wellness-based approaches to health and investing in education through lifelong learning, are traditional approaches which remain important to Albertans. Some, such as using the power of technology to develop new linkages and solutions, represent new challenges and directions.

Some of the ideas proposed at the Summit need further research and analysis. Some must be considered in conjunction with larger strategies. Some must be refined, revised and articulated in more detail. But several common approaches were evident. These included the continuing need for comprehensive, long-term planning and long-range budgeting and investment. Long-term budgets and plans help Albertans find an appropriate balance between quality of life and economic development. They also help to stabilize the economy, which in turn contributes to a healthy environment and stable health, education and social programs.

Continued diversification is needed to strengthen and stabilize Alberta's economy. This reduces Alberta's vulnerability to the boom and bust of natural resource revenue fluctuations. It can help to renew Alberta's rural and urban communities, lower unemployment rates and provide opportunities for entrepreneurship. Alberta should continue to build on its traditional strengths by adding value to its products and services, while at the same time seeking new opportunities for diversification. In the future diversification must be connected to sustainability—for all parts of the province.

Paybacks in the future sometimes require investments today. Investments in infrastructure, research and education are investments in the province's future success. Albertans envisioned a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation. They recognized the importance of investing in research, innovation and the commercialization of research results. They also recognized that highly skilled, well-educated workers will be the foundation of the global, knowledge-based economy of the future. Albertans' suggestions included promoting lifelong learning, ensuring that education curricula and delivery systems meet a range of needs, and using technology to enhance continuous learning.

Albertans recognized the importance of effective governance and the ongoing need to clarify government roles and responsibilities. They recognized that stable funding is needed to maintain a sustainable health care system; provide Albertans with accessible, affordable, high-quality education; protect the environment; and preserve and enhance our quality of life. Ongoing, stable funding is also needed to support communities in developing long-range infrastructure plans as well as cultural, social and recreational services, facilities and programs.

Albertans understand that maintaining programs and building new ones comes with a price. They have high expectations, and although they may "want to have it all," there is a limit to what the province can afford. Managing expectations, defining core services, and balancing needs

and resources are important first steps. Albertans need to weigh their options carefully and be willing to consider new approaches and new ideas. And they need to make difficult choices.

Alberta's plan for the future must be developed as a package. Strategies cannot emerge in isolation. Rather, Albertans must consider the push and pull of competing needs—within a framework of fiscal responsibility and government balancing its budget. They must develop strategies based on cooperation, compromise and an understanding of the interconnectedness of the pieces that will shape the province. Albertans proposed a partnership approach for addressing key issues and maximizing the utilization of resources.

There is no doubt that change is in the air. Alberta is growing. Our economy is increasingly global. New technologies are changing our communities, our workplaces, our environment and our view of ourselves and our world. But Albertans are prepared to confront these challenges. They welcome the opportunity to manage growth and change, to outline their priorities and to make strategic progress on the issues that face the province. More and more, Albertans recognize their citizenship in a global community.

The Future Summit has given Albertans a voice in shaping the future of the province. But the work has just begun. The problems are complex and the best path is not always easy to find. The challenge is finding solutions that do the most good for the most people.

We call on all Albertans—governments, the private sector, nonprofit agencies, community groups and individual citizens—to rise to this challenge. Building on the foundation of the Future Summit, let us work together and step forward toward the future.

Planning for the future is everyone's business.

External Advisory Committee
Alberta Future Summit 2002

The Landscape of the Future

A Vision for Alberta

Values and Guiding Principles

Trends and Issues

A Vision for Alberta

The Albertans who participated in the Future Summit process offered a wealth of wonderful ideas that will help shape the future of the province.

When Albertans look toward the future they see a province with a strong economy and a skilled, productive workforce. They see a healthy environment and strong, safe communities. They see future generations of Albertans enjoying high-quality health care and lifelong learning opportunities. They see their governments living within their means. And they see individual citizens, governments, businesses and communities working together—getting involved, contributing and volunteering to make Alberta the best it can be.

Albertans see the province as a recognized world leader in scientific and technological research and development. They see a place where innovation drives progress in a self-sufficient, diverse, high-tech society. They see technology, partnerships, innovation and value-added business ventures as keys to future success.

Albertans' vision for the future focuses on seven key elements (in no particular order of priority):

- accessible, affordable education
- a first-class health care system that promotes healthy living and wellness
- a clean, healthy environment
- a strong economy that makes it possible for all Albertans to share in the province's prosperity
- safe, caring communities supported by well-planned and well-maintained infrastructure
- effective government
- building a legacy for their children and grandchildren

Education, health and wellness, the environment and the economy head Albertans' list of priorities. These issues are interconnected. For example, good infrastructure, health and education attract investment and support a strong economy. Health education promotes healthy lifestyles. Protection of our natural environment balances the development of natural resources.

When Alberta's citizens think about the future, they would like to see all Albertans benefiting from province-wide prosperity.

Albertans want to leave a legacy for future generations. They see a legacy founded on:

- a province that is debt free
- fiscally responsible, effective governance
- sustainable economic growth balanced with responsible environmental management
- sustainable health and education systems responsive to the needs of Albertans
- thriving, secure communities
- innovation and leading-edge technology

Values and Guiding Principles

The values and guiding principles identified by Albertans recognized the worth and value of people. They spanned a breadth of elements-—from caring and compassion to creativity and happiness. Sustainability and balance were the most-mentioned principles. Education and health were the most-mentioned priorities.

Personal Values

In the Future Summit consultations, Albertans identified the personal values they live by. Honesty, integrity, hard work and self-reliance were cited most often. Albertans also value patience, respect, acceptance of diversity, faith, compassion, openness and trust.

Societal Values

Albertans identified a broad span of societal values that reflect the recognition of others within society. These values were often expressed as principles that Albertans as a society value.

Albertans value children and families and mentioned family values in a variety of contexts. Some Albertans cited the need to emphasize and sustain family values. Some commented on the need for balance between family life and work. Some discussed families in relation to children: they spoke of the need to invest in children and keep them safe from neglect and abuse.

Albertans value freedom—freedom of choice, personal freedom, free enterprise and the freedoms that come from democracy and our system of justice.

Albertans value fairness, equality, respect and social responsibility. Many touched on the need to care for those less able to help themselves and the need to help one another. Respect was discussed in terms of respect for each other, for the environment, for elders and for the past. Equality referred to the equality of individuals and opportunities for all.

Albertans value inclusiveness, cultural diversity and acceptance of individual differences. They value safe, secure communities that provide opportunities to enjoy the arts, culture, sports and recreation.

Albertans value education as the door to the future and recognize children and young people as an important part of that future. They value continuous learning, innovation, knowledge and research.

Albertans value health and wellness. They value their province's natural environment and believe it should be protected. They value their communities and believe in community service with a true spirit of volunteerism. They also value good government—government that is accountable, accessible, fiscally responsible and responsive to the needs of its citizens.

Guiding Principles

Albertans proposed a broad range of principles and approaches that should guide the province—and individual citizens—in making decisions and choices. They felt that Alberta's decisions for the future should be based on the principles of accessibility, cooperation, leadership, adaptability, accountability and sustainability.

Sustainability was mentioned in many contexts—sustainable development, sustainable environments, financial sustainability, and economic and social sustainability. Many Albertans discussed the concept of balance in conjunction with sustainability. Specific examples included:

- the balance between individual and government responsibility
- the balance between economic development and environmental protection
- the balance between family life and work

Albertans commented on the relationships between a high standard of living and employment, job opportunities and training. They also commented on quality of life as it related to education, health, communities, the environment and government.

Change your opinions, keep to your principles; change your leaves, keep intact your roots.

— Victor Hugo (1802–1885), French poet, novelist, playwright and essayist

Trends and Issues

The current population of Canada cannot maintain the current size of its labour force in the future. More importantly, it cannot expand its labour force to support the economic growth and labour supply to support its aging population.

— David Baxter, "Canada's aging workforce lacks boomer replacements" [online]. Reprinted from *Business in Vancouver*, June 5–11, 2001. [Cited March 14, 2002.] <www.urbanfutures.com>

There are 12.1 million people under the age of 30 in Canada today: this will be the core workforce of the next 30 years. This is not enough to replace the 13.4 million people currently aged 30 to 59 who will leave the labour force over the next 30 years.

— David Baxter, "Fewer workers in Canada will result in labour turmoil" [online]. Reprinted from *Business in Vancouver*, July 10–16, 2001. [Cited March 14, 2002.] <www.urbanfutures.com>

Demographic drivers were the topic of a presentation made by David Baxter, executive director of the Urban Futures Institute, at the opening plenary of the Alberta Future Summit 2002 in Red Deer, February 4, 2002. A summary of this presentation follows.

Alberta's age profile is almost identical to Canada's. The average birth rate is 1.7 children born per woman during her lifetime, compared to 4.4 children in the 1960s. This means there is a growing number of people over 65 relative to the number of working people. It means our health system will not be sustainable—not because of any structural flaw, but because Alberta will not have enough workers to fund health care for the growing numbers of older people. It also means a tight labour market, with labour shortages in some sectors.

Declining population growth and the issues of dealing with an aging population are today's issues, but they have significant implications for the future.

Declining population growth is a concern for other provinces as well as for Alberta. As a result, Alberta must find a new source of young labour force migrants. It cannot continue to draw from other parts of Canada. Rather, it must rely on immigration from other countries. This means that Alberta's communities will become more diverse.

To maintain its labour force, Alberta must also reduce emigration, increase participation in the workforce and embrace change.

Coping with changing demographics means Albertans must become lifelong learners. They must be good stewards of the economy and increase labour force productivity. They must also secure markets for their products, which will require a global approach.

In January 2002, a pubic opinion poll was conducted to give Future Summit delegates an idea of what Albertans considered to be priority issues. 52% identified health care as the single most important issue facing Alberta today. Other priorities included education, the economy, social issues, taxes and the environment.

When Albertans were asked how the province could ensure the best future, they responded as follows:

- **Work to improve education.**
- **Improve health care and the environment.**
- **Increase public participation in politics.**
- **Ensure diligent management of natural resources.**
- **Have people make their voices heard.**
- **Strengthen the economy.**

— as reported by Janet Brown of Environics West at the Alberta Future Summit 2002, February 4, 2002

Putting It All Together

Interconnections
An Integrated Approach

Interconnections

The laws of physics dictate that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. The same laws hold when planning for the future.

Future Summit delegates and the Albertans who contributed to the Summit consultations were keenly aware that the path to the future is paved with compromise. They understood that the seven Summit themes are inextricably linked and that action on one front may have profound effects on other areas.

Summit delegates identified some of the ways in which the issues that face Alberta are interconnected. They discussed the trade-offs that must be considered in making decisions about the future. Most importantly, they recognized that strategies for their particular theme could not be developed in isolation. An integrated approach is required.

The Economy

Most delegates—as well as the Albertans who contributed to the Future Summit consultations—saw a strong economy as a means to an end. A strong economy supports the province's communities and its health and education systems. It creates jobs and sustains Alberta's arts, cultural and recreational institutions. It gives all Albertans the means to enjoy a high standard of living and makes it possible for people to enjoy life and have meaningful employment.

Albertans recognized that economic development must be carefully balanced with environmental protection and sustainability. Some delegates noted the need for fairness in assigning economic and environmental costs and benefits. They maintained that the two sectors are interdependent and that the respective needs of each must be respected.

Economic diversification was proposed as a means of strengthening the economy and, at the same time, protecting the environment. Developing clean, affordable energy from renewable, sustainable sources is one example of diversification that has economic as well as environmental benefits.

Economic cycles have a direct impact on Alberta's ability to be fiscally responsible. Diversification is an important strategy for stabilizing the economy because it reduces Alberta's vulnerability to the boom and bust volatility of natural resource revenues. A stable economy supports stable

health care, education and communities. But diversification is not the only solution. Responsible fiscal planning, transparent budgeting and strategies to stabilize revenues are also required. Good governance is also a factor: legislation and policy must support sustainable economic development.

In today's world, a strong, stable economy is competitive on the global stage. In the coming years, Alberta will need to ensure that its labour force has the skills and training for a globally competitive, knowledge-based economy. Since Alberta's population is aging, the province will also need to rely on immigration to meet workforce needs.

Future Summit delegates recognized that education contributes to a strong economy and to Albertans' quality of life. They emphasized the importance of accessibility, affordability and excellence in education, but acknowledged the need to balance these three issues. Delegates also recognized the importance of lifelong learning which ensures that individuals can fully participate in the economy and have opportunities to use their skills and knowledge.

Alberta's health system is another important component of a strong economy because healthy citizens are productive citizens. Some delegates also viewed health care as an industry and a source of economic activity.

Learning

The importance of education cannot be overemphasized. Delegates in nearly all the Future Summit theme groups—the economy, fiscal responsibility, communities, health and wellness, and the environment—proposed specific strategies for education.

Summit delegates recognized that educated, knowledgeable, self-reliant workers are the key to Alberta's continued competitiveness. Competitiveness also depends on innovation, research and development, and technology.

An excellent education system supports good research. Research produces innovation. This often leads to more efficient delivery of services and can also create spin-off industries and commercial activities.

Alberta enjoys a return on its investment in highly trained people. An educated workforce meets the needs of the economy now and in the future. A strong economy attracts investment, which makes it possible for Alberta's skilled human capital to stay in the province and contribute to Alberta's communities.

Education helps Albertans become well-rounded, lifelong learners who are active participants in a knowledge-based economy and who make positive contributions to society. It helps Albertans become self-reliant, reducing the need for social assistance programs. It addresses social issues, helps to remove barriers and gives all Albertans the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of the Alberta Advantage.

Education is an important determinant of health and wellness. It provides Albertans with the information and skills they need to prevent illness and maintain active, healthy lives. It helps Albertans understand what must be done to protect the environment. And it provides a strong foundation for research and innovation.

Accessibility, affordability and excellence in education are important issues that must be considered within the context of fiscal responsibility and governance.

The Environment

The quality of the environment has a direct impact on Albertans' health and wellness. Protecting the environment can be viewed as a preventative measure that contributes to Albertans' health. By extension, this reduces Albertans' use of the health care system and saves costs.

Good health is linked to air and water quality, but parks, green spaces and natural areas are also important. A clean, healthy environment can contribute to Albertans' spiritual and mental well-being.

Albertans must make considered decisions about what kind of industry they want to grow. They must explicitly recognize the effects of economic growth, industrial expansion, pollution, urban sprawl and rural development on the environment and decide what trade-offs they are willing to make. The issues are complex and, as demonstrated by the diversity of opinion with regard to the Kyoto Protocol, finding an appropriate solution will not be an easy task.

Preserving the environment is everyone's responsibility and understanding the issues is an important starting point. This requires education and knowledge about conservation, environmental protection, recycling and re-use. Knowledge creates awareness and changes behaviour. To protect the environment in the future, Alberta needs education and public awareness now. The province also needs appropriate legislation and regulation as well as minimum standards for environmental protection.

Sustaining the environment will not come without costs. Future Summit delegates recognized the correlation between the health of the environment and long-term planning, cooperation and the availability of funds to support environmental initiatives.

Communities

Communities are more than a place to live. They're a place for fun and involvement and they support Albertans' health and wellness and quality of life. They are also important advocates for good environmental planning, green space preservation and conservation.

Strong communities need plans and programs to promote healthy living, encourage volunteerism and foster Albertans' participation in community life.

Education plays an important role in developing community leaders and preparing young people to become contributing members of society. Community leaders can make a positive contribution and enhance school curriculum in areas such as leadership. They can help ensure that Alberta's learning system addresses workforce needs and builds on community strengths.

Summit delegates recognized that building strong communities, protecting our environment and preserving and enhancing our quality of life require adequate financial resources.

Communities need stable funding in order to develop long-range infrastructure plans and to finance cultural, social and recreational services, facilities and programs. Delegates acknowledged that more money for community initiatives might mean higher taxes. However, they also proposed that alternative models could be used. The latter included setting priorities, limiting the growth of government, and achieving community goals through partnerships of individuals, volunteers and the private sector.

Fiscal responsibility in the form of realistic, long-term budgets and plans will help Alberta's communities achieve sustainability and find an appropriate balance between quality of life and economic development. Cooperative approaches are required.

Summit delegates emphasized that addressing social problems now is fiscally responsible. In the case of supporting children with special needs, for example, paying now could result in savings later.

Delegates viewed the funding of social programs—including health, education and social services—as a fourfold investment. It addresses specific needs, prevents costly problems, contributes to the economy, and provides incentives for businesses and people to locate in Alberta communities.

Economic diversification can help to renew Alberta's rural and urban communities and ensure that smaller centres prosper. Economic diversification can also help lower unemployment rates

and provide opportunities for entrepreneurship. These are strong incentives for young people to stay in their communities.

Summit delegates recognized that governance issues have a profound effect on Alberta's communities. Acts and regulations affect the ability of communities to collect taxes, raise funds and deal with land use issues.

Health

Healthy people are more productive people. High productivity is the mark of a strong economy, and a strong economy supports a strong health care system.

Increasing globalization increases competition for skilled workers, with the result that Alberta faces shortages of health care providers. Acknowledging foreign credentials is one way of reducing the strains on the system. Legislative changes are also required to define core services and support new, more cost-effective delivery models.

The health of our environment greatly affects the health and wellness of Albertans. Good health is linked to air and water quality, but parks, green spaces and natural areas are also important for Albertans' well-being. Sensible land stewardship preserves the environment so it can support the trails, parks and recreational infrastructure that help Albertans stay healthy and fit.

To maintain good health and wellness, Albertans need to adopt a preventative approach. This requires education and awareness about the components of good health, which include a nutritious, balanced diet and regular physical activity. Health and wellness education must start early—in the school system—and become a lifelong commitment.

Socio-economic factors also affect health. Addressing the root causes of poor health includes addressing poverty and homelessness and providing Albertans with the knowledge they need to stay active, eat well and make healthy lifestyle choices. Addressing these issues helps build strong communities. And community-based health delivery can improve services for citizens and even reduce overall costs.

Alberta needs a sustainable health system. Sustainability is closely linked to fiscal responsibility. Managing expectations, defining core services and balancing needs and resources are important steps. Summit delegates proposed an integrated, team-based health and wellness approach and viewed spending on health as an investment rather than a cost. They also acknowledged that the government could not pay for everything and that alternative ways of funding the system are needed.

Governance

Governance defines the processes by which societies and institutions function. It deals with policy, standards, accountability, legislation and operating principles. It determines how resources are allocated and choices defined.

Governance issues have implications for all aspects of Alberta's society—for the economy, learning, communities, health and wellness, and the environment.

Future Summit delegates recognized that good governance depends on strong communities and empowered citizens who are active participants in the political process. It also depends on partnerships—between regions and local communities and between the various orders of government. Partnerships between government departments are also important for the effective delivery of services.

Good governance provides the foundation for a future which recognizes Alberta's role within Canada and Albertans' obligations as citizens of the world.

Fiscal Responsibility

Albertans realize that maintaining programs and building new ones comes with a price. Although we may "want to have it all," there is a limit to what we can afford. But not spending on programs can also have a price.

Fiscal responsibility addresses the choices that must be made in allocating dollars to the priorities identified by Albertans. For all the Summit theme groups, there were two key questions:

- How can the province remain fiscally responsible and still meet Albertans' expectations and needs?
- Where will the money come from?

Many Summit delegates and many Albertans expressed their commitment to a competitive tax structure and to eliminating the debt. No-deficit budgeting and the elimination of debt frees money for program spending or tax cuts. The "extra dollars" are available to spend on communities, health, learning and other priorities.

Many Summit delegates saw no-deficit budgeting as the only option for Alberta. Other delegates—and other Albertans—were concerned by the tension between fiscal responsibility and Alberta's ability to deliver essential programs and services. This tension emerged within the Fiscal Responsibility delegates' group itself.

Summit delegates recognized the relationship between fiscal responsibility and social issues such as low-income housing, poverty, education and health. They also recognized that the amount of money we have to work with determines how much can be spent and which options must take priority.

Fiscal responsibility depends on comprehensive planning, responsible budgeting and the stabilization of government revenues and expenditures. Summit delegates recognized the need for balance and careful planning. They cautioned that the impact of spending choices—and choosing not to spend—must be carefully weighed. In some cases, cuts to programs now might create greater expenses later.

Fiscal responsibility also deals with saving and investing for the future. Deciding what to do with the Heritage Fund is a key issue. Many delegates in the Fiscal Responsibility group recommended that the fund should be restructured. They also recognized that many sides of the issue must be considered.

Summit delegates and other Albertans identified many forms of investment. Many believed that investing in preventative health approaches, environmental protection, public services and community infrastructure helps keep Albertans healthy and that, in the long run, such investments are fiscally responsible.

Many Albertans believed that education is a wise and fiscally responsible investment. Investing in education ensures that Alberta will be globally competitive and have a skilled, educated workforce that meets a diversity of needs. Skilled Abertans will choose to stay in the province and help to build Alberta's communities.

Delegates in the Fiscal Responsibility group recognized the correlation between the health of the environment and the availability of funds to support environmental initiatives.

An Integrated Approach

Several common approaches emerged as Future Summit delegates developed strategies and ideas for action for the seven Summit themes—the economy, learning, fiscal responsibility, communities, health and wellness, the environment and governance. These included:

- planning and budgeting
- diversification
- education
- research and innovation
- partnerships
- foundations for success
- effective government
- stable funding and fiscal responsibility

Planning and Budgeting

Many of the Summit delegate groups identified a need for comprehensive planning and responsible budgeting. Transparent budgets and plans provide information needed for decision making, program evaluation and the enforcement of standards.

Realistic, long-term plans and budgets can help Alberta's communities achieve sustainability and find an appropriate balance between quality of life and economic development. They can also help to stabilize the economy. A stable economy in turn contributes to a healthy environment and stable health, education and social programs.

Delegates in the Economy group proposed creating a comprehensive, long-term, economic plan which extends over a number of business and political cycles and addresses infrastructure, fiscal policy and environmental needs.

Delegates in the Environment group proposed developing a long-term environmental protection plan that is well researched, proactive, founded on solid science and based on sustainable strategies, enforceable standards and measurable results. They believed that governments, businesses, communities and individual citizens should be partners in developing and implementing

the plan. They also proposed that regional planning initiatives should be developed to safeguard Alberta's land and water resources, protect ecologically sensitive areas and preserve green space, while fostering environmentally friendly economic development.

Fiscal Responsibility group delegates proposed the development of outcome-based business and program plans that address Albertans' priorities and help sustain a high quality of life. They noted that plans must be results-based and flexible enough to accommodate change. They must also define expected outcomes and benchmarks and connect program spending with outcomes.

In the Communities group, delegates identified a need for sustainable, strategic, long-term community development and budget plans—and accountability for these plans.

Health and Wellness delegates recognized the need to develop, manage and evaluate long-range, sustainable, fiscally responsible budgets for a new health and wellness system. They proposed consulting with Albertans to determine what kind of health care they want and how they want to pay for it.

Delegates in the Learning group identified a need for both short- and long-term planning. As a first stage, they proposed identifying learners' needs and developing learning opportunities that serve a diverse public. Their suggestions included the establishment of a task force to study education and learning.

Delegates in the Governance group discussed the need for Alberta to develop strategic planning capabilities as a tool for coping with the demands of an increasingly turbulent global environment. They proposed the appointment of a provincial Chief Strategic Planning Officer and an advisory committee on strategic planning. They also recognized that good communication is important for good governance.

Diversification

Many delegate groups proposed diversification as a means of strengthening and stabilizing Alberta's economy. Diversification reduces Alberta's vulnerability to the boom and bust of natural resource revenue fluctuations. It can help to renew Alberta's rural and urban communities, lower unemployment rates and provide opportunities for entrepreneurship.

Delegates in the Environment group proposed diversifying the economy to reduce Alberta's reliance on petroleum. Their suggestions included seeking alternative energy sources. The Fiscal Responsibility group proposed furthering the economic diversification of the province in order to reduce Alberta's dependence on nonrenewable natural resources. Specific suggestions included identifying industry sectors which can provide Alberta with a competitive advantage; expanding small business loan programs; increasing spending on education and research; and investing in human capital to ensure that Alberta can meet future demands for skilled labour.

Delegates in the Communities group also recognized the importance of economic diversification. Their suggestions included using technology to expand market opportunities, developing venture capital pools to finance start-up companies, and providing incentives for businesses to expand and diversify into local communities.

Education

Delegates in nearly all the Future Summit theme groups—the economy, fiscal responsibility, communities, health and wellness, and the environment—proposed specific strategies for education.

The Economy group focused on excellence in education at all levels. Their suggestions included promoting lifelong learning, ensuring that curricula and delivery systems meet a range of needs and using technology to enhance learning.

The Fiscal Responsibility group proposed investing in Alberta's future success by investing in education today. They noted the need for life skills, training and education programs that instill self-reliance in Albertans and meet the needs of the labour market. They also proposed investing in infrastructure to ensure that Albertans can access the learning opportunities they need. These sentiments were echoed by the Communities group, which emphasized the importance of accessible, affordable education and training.

The Health and Wellness group proposed using public forums, school curricula and professional development programs to educate individuals, health care professionals and other stakeholders about wellness.

Delegates in the Environment group proposed the implementation of multi-level environmental education programs to foster awareness and ensure the ecological integrity and sustainability of Alberta's environment. They recognized the need for formal as well as informal environmental education.

Research and Innovation

Summit delegates often discussed research and innovation within the context of entrepreneurship, leadership and excellence.

The Economy group proposed creating and sustaining a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation. They recommended teaching entrepreneurial skills to young Albertans, fostering an environment that promotes research and development, and providing the funding and support needed to promote innovation—from the initial research and development stages all the way through to the commercialization of research results.

Delegates in the Learning group proposed the allocation of resources to foster research, innovation, excellence and continuous improvement. They felt that research and development in a broad range of disciplines supported continuous learning and helped build a society that can adapt to change.

Delegates in the Health and Wellness group recommended that a comprehensive, secure health database be developed to improve the efficiency of the health system. In their discussion of opportunities for the future, they recognized that research results contribute to evidence-based decision making.

Partnerships

Many of the Summit delegate groups proposed a partnership approach for addressing key issues and problems. They also stressed that "partnership does not mean downloading." Rather, it must include accountability and appropriate transfers of resources.

Delegates in the Communities group believed that a partnership approach could help to maximize the utilization of resources in Alberta's communities. They proposed creating partnerships of citizens, business and government to ensure that all Albertans have access to affordable, equitable education.

Delegates in the Fiscal Responsibility group recommended the establishment of public–private sector partnerships and partnerships between government and the business community. They also proposed that citizens, the private sector and not-for-profit organizations should be more involved in government decision making. They suggested that public and private-sector input could be sought through forums, advisory groups and meetings.

Foundations for Success

In the Future Summit consultations, Albertans expressed a fundamental belief that individuals should take first and foremost responsibility for themselves and their welfare. They believed that government should play only a secondary or supporting role. But while they stressed the need for self-reliance and personal responsibility, they also recognized that some Albertans face barriers to self-sufficiency and success.

Summit delegates recognized the relationship between fiscal responsibility and social issues such as low-income housing, poverty, education and health.

The Health and Wellness group believed that reducing poverty reduces obstacles to good health. They recommended life skills training to help the poor access job opportunities. They also proposed early intervention programs to ensure that children living in poverty receive adequate nutrition.

The Learning group recognized that, for some Albertans, there are barriers which prevent access to learning opportunities. These include the high cost of tuition, literacy problems and the lack of family support services.

Effective Government

The Fiscal Responsibility group identified the need to clarify government roles and responsibilities and to eliminate the duplication of government services. Other groups included similar suggestions in their strategy proposals. Many also mentioned the need for ongoing regulatory review.

Summit delegates recognized that Alberta needs legislation and policy that supports sustainable economic development. The province needs legislation, regulation and minimum standards for environmental protection.

The Health group recommended legislative changes to define core services and support new, more cost-effective delivery models. They saw acknowledging foreign credentials as one way of reducing the strains on the system. They suggested that the certification process for foreign-trained medical professionals should be reviewed.

Governance is often related to appropriate standards and performance measures. Delegates in the Learning group proposed that standards are needed to maintain appropriate levels of investment in infrastructure and to ensure that existing infrastructure is used as efficiently as possible. The Learning group also proposed the development of new governance and delivery models. Many of their suggestions dealt with identifying and re-evaluating the roles of various stakeholders. They included exploring alternative learning approaches.

Stable Funding and Fiscal Responsibility

Summit delegates recognized that building strong communities, protecting our environment and preserving and enhancing our quality of life require adequate financial resources.

Communities need stable funding in order to develop long-range infrastructure plans and to finance cultural, social and recreational services, facilities and programs.

Ongoing, stable funding is also needed to support environmental research and conservation initiatives. Delegates in the Environment group proposed the immediate establishment of an initiative fund to support environmental and conservation projects.

Delegates in the Learning group recommended the establishment of a funding and policy framework to support accessible, affordable, high-quality learning opportunities for Albertans. They noted the importance of ensuring that learners in financial need have the opportunity to access education beyond Grade 12. They also recommended the establishment of funding partnerships between schools and the private sector.

Stable funding was also an issue for the Health group. Delegates suggested that a revenue fund should be established to support sustainability and ensure that core services are adequately funded. They also recognized that a sustainable health system is closely linked to fiscal responsibility. Managing expectations, defining core services, and balancing needs and resources are important steps. Summit delegates proposed an integrated, team-based health and wellness approach and viewed spending on health as an investment rather than a cost. They also acknowledged that the government could not pay for everything and that alternate ways of funding the system are needed.

Many Summit delegates saw debt elimination and no-deficit budgeting as the only options for Alberta. Other delegates—and other Albertans—were concerned about the tension between fiscal responsibility and Alberta's ability to deliver essential programs and services. They cautioned that accelerated debt elimination and low taxes should not come at the expense of cuts to health care, education and infrastructure. At the same time, other delegates maintained that low taxes are critical for economic growth and prosperity.

Summit delegates recognized the need for balance and careful planning. The impact of spending choices—and choosing not to spend—must be carefully weighed. In some cases, cuts to programs now might create greater expenses later.

Achieving Albertans' priorities means that choices must be made. The problems are complex and the best path is not always easy to find. The challenge is finding solutions that do the most good for the most people.

Bold Steps

The Economy

Learning

Fiscal Responsibility

Communities

Health and Wellness

The Environment

Governance

The information in this chapter comes from two sources:

- the Future Summit public consultations (September–December 2001), during which Albertans provided input through the *Imagine Our Tomorrow* workbook, Regional Forums and meetings hosted by MLAs
    - *These consultations defined a vision for the future and the values and guiding principles which should guide Albertans' decisions. They also produced a broad range of viewpoints and ideas about the future.*
- the deliberations of delegates at the Alberta Future Summit 2002 in Red Deer, February 4–5, 2002
    - *Summit delegates validated the vision proposed by Albertans; identified obstacles, opportunities and theme-specific guiding principles; and developed strategies and ideas for building the future.*

The chapter includes seven sections, which correspond to the seven Summit themes. The following information is included for each theme:

- background information compiled for the Future Summit
- Albertans' vision for the theme
- guiding principles
- strategies and ideas for action
- "What Albertans Had to Say"

The vision material is a composite of Summit delegates' views and the input Albertans provided during the public consultations (September–December 2001). "What Albertans Had to Say" is a summary of Albertans' contributions during these consultations.

The remaining material was generated by delegates in one of the seven theme groups at the Alberta Future Summit in Red Deer, February 4–5, 2002.

The work in Red Deer was extremely focused and intensive. The delegates were a diverse group of people who held a wide range of opinions on the issues that face Alberta. Some of these issues proved more complex than others in terms of causes, effects and impacts on other sectors. While the delegates strove to reach consensus, this could not always be achieved.

In most cases, the strategies developed in Red Deer had the support of all the delegates in the particular theme group. Exceptions are noted in the report.

There was less consensus on the specific ideas for action. Sometimes this was because time constraints did not allow for the depth of discussion needed to build compromise. Sometimes, in spite of lengthy discussions, delegates could not agree because their opinions were too far apart. In most cases, this indicates that the issue requires further work.

The Summit gallery walks gave delegates from other theme groups an opportunity to contribute to the discussions. **(See Appendix A for details.)** While the input from other delegates was considered by the host group, it was not always endorsed and may not have been incorporated into the group's final results.

A representative sampling of the views expressed during the Summit gallery walks is included for each theme. While these views may not have had the support of the host delegates' group, they are included here to ensure that dissenting voices are heard and that decision makers have a full range of ideas to consider.

We need to look to the future [and] be bold when making decisions about our well-being and developing strategies for our future.

Future Summit Workbook Submission
Age Category: 19–24
Edmonton

The Economy

Background

Alberta has a population of just over three million and a strong, vibrant economy characterized by:

- low, competitive taxes
- a business-friendly environment
- low unemployment
- modern, world-class infrastructure
- a well-educated and prosperous population

Alberta's economy is driven by traditional industries such as oil and gas, petrochemicals, forestry, agricultural services and products, and tourism. Over the past 15 years, the manufacturing sector has grown from 6.3% to 11.1% of the economy. The business and commercial services sector has expanded from 7.3% to 11.7%. Emerging sectors such as telecommunications equipment, electronics and software development are also growing.

In spite of the growth and diversification of Alberta's industries, energy remains the largest sector of the economy. In 1999 the energy sector accounted for almost 21% of Alberta's GDP.

Alberta's economy is export driven. In 1991 exports of goods and services contributed $20 billion to the economy. By 2000, exports accounted for $51 billion. Energy and nonrenewable resources generally account for between 50% to 60% of Alberta's total exports. Virtually all of Alberta's oil and gas exports go to the United States. Over 70% of Alberta's other exports are destined for United States markets.

As we enter the 21st century, Alberta's economy faces a number of challenges:

1. a shortage of skilled labour
   - *Skilled, knowledgeable workers are the foundation of a strong economy. In 2001, the provincial unemployment rate averaged 4.6%. This is indicative of a tight labour market, which means it is harder for businesses to find people to work.*
   - *Although Alberta's population is growing, the work force is also getting older. With the labour market already tight, the retirement of older workers may leave Alberta with a serious shortage of skilled labour. On the other hand, some segments of Alberta's workforce are underemployed.*

- *The workforce participation rates for Aboriginals, young people, immigrants, older workers and persons with disabilities are lower than for other segments of the population. The unemployment levels for these groups are significantly higher. Integrating these groups into Alberta's labour force could help reduce labour shortages and the resulting economic problems. It could also help to address social issues.*

2. competitive pressures
   - *Alberta's economy faces increasingly intense competition due to the globalization of markets, the harmonization of standards and regulations, technological advances which eliminate the barriers posed by distance, the increased mobility of people and capital, and advances in communication.*

3. productivity gap
   - *While Albertans are among the most productive of all Canadians, as a nation we have failed to keep pace with the United States. Canada's lower productivity rate is reflected in the Canadian dollar. This has resulted in a significant erosion of Canadians' standard of living over the last 10 years.*

4. reliance on commodity exports
   - *Despite rapid growth in manufacturing and service exports over the past 10 years, Alberta continues to rely heavily on primary resource exports (such as oil, gas, grains and oil seeds) and intermediate commodities (such as lumber, pulp and petrochemicals). Alberta's reliance on primary and intermediate resource exports makes the economy vulnerable. Economic and market diversification are key to future prosperity.*

5. investment
   - *The share of nonenergy investment in Alberta is falling as a proportion of total investments. Since investment drives economic growth, this may mask underlying problems for the economy.*

6. balance
   - *Continued development of our natural resources must balance the need for economic growth with sustainable development and environmental protection.*

7. population
   - *Alberta's population is not large enough to support a large provincial domestic market. As a result, Alberta depends on exports to achieve economies of scale in producing value-added goods.*

Albertans' Vision

The following vision for the economy is a composite of Summit delegates' views and the views of the 4,000 Albertans who voiced their opinions during the initial Summit consultations (September–December 2001).

When Albertans think about the future, they would like to see an economy that is robust, stable, resilient and diversified. A strong economy makes it possible for all Albertans to enjoy life and have meaningful employment.

In the Alberta of the future

Economic diversification helps to stabilize Alberta's economy and protect it from the volatility of boom–bust revenue streams. Albertans have invested in technology and the development of value-added industries, and planned ahead for the time when our oil and gas and other nonrenewable resources are no longer available. Resources are used strategically. Albertans enjoy economic prosperity while sustaining a clean, healthy environment.

The economy is strong in both rural and urban Alberta. Traditional sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing still have important roles. Tourism continues to expand. The value-added processing of resources through services and industries such as agribusiness is increasingly important. Technology plays a significant role in the economy.

Alberta's economy is based on small businesses as well as large enterprises. Development is environmentally and economically sustainable. Local ownership and control are valued.

The economy is supported by a strong infrastructure that meets community and business needs. Transportation systems are an important part of this infrastructure, as are electronic networks, housing, and cultural, recreational, educational and health care facilities.

Alberta has a skilled and well-trained workforce committed to safety as well as to continuous improvement and innovation. Albertans invest in the province's human capital. Full employment and fair wages provide opportunities for all citizens to prosper.

Alberta's economy is competitive in the global environment. Alberta maintains its competitive position in Canada and the world through:

- fiscal responsibility
- long-term planning
- a competitive tax structure
- research and development, including the commercialization of new technology
- a productive, creative workforce with the education and skills to compete in a knowledge-based economy
- innovation and entrepreneurship
- cooperation and inclusiveness of all Albertans, including Aboriginals
- sustainable development policies

Alberta is a recognized leader within Canada and on the world stage. Not only does the province's infrastructure support a strong economy, but its governance and fiscal policies are internationally recognized as models of best practices.

Future Summit delegates identified a number of obstacles that Albertans will need to overcome in order to realize this vision of the future. They developed a corresponding list of opportunities.

Obstacles

- Alberta faces shortages of skilled labour in the future. The province's population is relatively small. Alberta lacks sufficient critical mass to be truly global.
- Taxes and regulations can restrict economic development.
- There is a perception that Alberta lacks capital for investment opportunities.
- There is a lack of cooperation between the orders of government (federal, provincial and municipal). This sometimes results in the duplication of services, lack of services or higher service delivery costs.
- Provincial control over municipalities and inflexible legislation complicate community funding issues.
- The current method of formulating urban policy presents obstacles for Alberta's cities.

Opportunities

- Alberta has abundant natural resources.
- Alberta is well positioned to become a leader in establishing an economy based on renewable resources.
- Wind, solar energy and hydrogen can be developed as alternatives to fossil fuel energy.
- Clean coal technology provides the potential for Alberta to take advantage of its significant coal reserves.
- Alberta has strong infrastructure and world-class universities. Albertans have access to education and opportunities to learn other languages.
- Albertans have a strong innovative spirit, as demonstrated through initiatives such as the SuperNet.
- Alberta has a good health system with an active research and development component.
- Competitive taxes and minimal regulation attract economic opportunities.

Guiding Principles

A strong economy gives Albertans the means to enjoy a high standard of living. It supports areas such as health, learning and communities.

Economic development must be tied to improving the quality of people's lives and communities. It must be based on the principles of inclusiveness and shared prosperity.

Alberta's economic development strategies must consider more than just dollars and cents. They must put people first and ensure fair pay and safe, healthy working conditions. They must also include rewards for individuals who innovate, take risks and help to generate wealth for the province.

Diversification is the key to future economic prosperity. Diversifying the economy depends on creating and sustaining a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation. It requires continual market assessment, new approaches designed to address new opportunities, and integrated strategies.

Research and new technologies are important factors in diversifying the economy. Research results must be linked to commercialization.

A strong economy must include small, medium-sized and large businesses. It must recognize the diversity of challenges and opportunities across the province and respond to the specific needs of Alberta's urban, rural and Aboriginal communities.

Alberta's economy must be competitive on the global stage. Economic strategies must reflect a global perspective. They must be based on long-term plans that extend beyond business and political cycles and deal with infrastructure, the financial milieu (including the tax regime and access to venture capital), the environment, governance and intergovernmental cooperation.

Economic development must be balanced with sustainability, environmental protection and good stewardship. Albertans today must ensure that the economy can stay strong for the benefit of future generations.

An effective education system can help Albertans realize new opportunities and diversify our province's economy. The focus of Alberta's education system must be creating and nurturing excellence.

Strategies and Ideas for Action

The following is a summary of delegates' deliberations at the Alberta Future Summit 2002 in Red Deer, February 4–5, 2002. In most cases, the strategies had the support of all the delegates in the Economy group. There was less consensus about some of the specific ideas for action.

DEVELOP AN ECONOMIC PLAN.

I Create a comprehensive, long-term, economic plan that extends over a number of business and political cycles and addresses infrastructure, fiscal policy and environmental needs.

The proposed plan is intended as a starting point. It must be founded on sound policies that are congruent with Alberta's vision for the future.

1. Articulate the details of the proposed economic plan. Assemble "the best minds" to help with this initiative.

2. Support the implementation of the plan by means of transparent government policy, legislation and regulation.

3. Plan for the time when nonrenewable resources are depleted.

4. Plan for developing alternative sources of energy and for eliciting public awareness and support for such initiatives.

5. Move northern water south.

   During the Summit gallery walk, many delegates strongly opposed this proposal. Here are some of their comments:

   - Not sustainable! We need to calculate the true cost of such megaprojects and the environmental capital loss for future generations.
   - Will the overall economy grow if we can expand the agricultural base through water transfer?
   - Moving water! Are you nuts? Move the agriculture to the water.

6. Develop regional, economic development strategies which recognize that Alberta and the Western provinces share some common goals. This may help Alberta compete on the national and international stage.

7. Invest in infrastructure that meets 21st century standards. This will include state-of-the-art transportation, communication and information networks; utilities, including power and clean water; and electronic, digital and wireless technology.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Albertans should pool their capital to invest in Alberta companies, start-up businesses and youth enterprises.
- Albertans should establish regulations to encourage the formation of risk capital pools to finance new start-up enterprises in Alberta.
- The plan needs to address a new formula for funding infrastructure in municipalities. The present program is arbitrary and varies with political revenue and agendas.
- The government needs to support megaprojects that will support economic growth. A high-speed rail link between Edmonton and Calgary is one example.

STRIVE TOWARD GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS.

II Continue to foster a globally competitive market economy.

1. Improve Alberta's personal and corporate tax structure to ensure that the province is internationally competitive.
   - *Lower taxes as much as possible without compromising the ability of Alberta's infrastructure, education and health systems to attract people and investment.*
   - *Replace the provincial income tax with a provincial sales tax (PST). Allow municipalities to add one or two percent to the PST.*

2. Improve the productivity of the labour force.
   - *Strive for excellence in educating Alberta's workforce.*
   - *Introduce balanced labour policies and "right-to-work" legislation. De-unionize Alberta.*
   - *Improve the climate for entrepreneurship.*

3. Establish effective governance and an appropriate regulatory regime.
   - *Review and streamline all regulations that affect the economy.*
   - *Clearly define responsibilities across all orders of government and rationalize the delivery of services.*
   - *Encourage cross-sectoral (profit and nonprofit) and intergovernmental cooperation.*
   - *Contribute to the development of federal economic policy in areas of shared interest.*
   - *Reduce the size of government as a percentage of Alberta's gross domestic product. Employ fewer Ministers, but pay them better.*

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Learning investments are essential for a strong economy. The volatility of the economy is one of the most significant challenges to long-term, sustainable support.
- How do you maintain a labour force through economic cycles? Skill shortages are a direct result of forcing skilled labour to leave the province when there is a downturn.
- Introduce pay equity legislation.
- In spite of Alberta's embarrassment of riches, one must acknowledge that there are greater disparities of financial wealth than at any time over the last century. We must work to reduce this inequality.

- Eliminate supply management and restrictive marketing boards to allow the development of Alberta's economic comparative advantage.
- Do not create long-term plans. Create long-term understanding and intentions.
- In 1999, health and education contributed only 8.5% of Alberta's GDP, yet these two sectors consume a huge percentage of the province's budget. The result is that not much government money is spent on other economic sectors, yet Alberta is successful. The conclusion? Government intervention in other sectors is not productive. Less is more.

PURSUE EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION.

III Pursue excellence in education at all levels—from preschool through postsecondary and beyond.

Lifelong learning ensures that individuals can fully participate in the economy and have opportunities to use their skills and knowledge.

1. Reward educational achievement.

2. Build world-class universities that are recognized as centres of excellence in research and educational programming.

3. Pursue student success. Strive to achieve 100% graduation rates.

4. Ensure that educational opportunities are accessible to all Albertans and that curricula and delivery systems meet a range of needs.

5. Foster, encourage and promote lifelong learning.

6. Enhance learning through the effective use of technology.

7. Create educational partnerships between governments, organizations, the private sector and individuals.

8. Promote health and wellness education to develop healthy children.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Focus primary, secondary and postsecondary education on real life skills.
- Don't forget about nonuniversity postsecondary education. Technological and trades certification is also needed in the workforce.
- Not all learning does or should take place in institutions. Spend dollars on community development.
- Focus on developing world-class educational facilities at all levels, including high schools and vocational schools as well as universities.
- Education needs to develop basic knowledge—in spelling and math, for example.
- Education needs to be innovative.
- Teachers should be paid on the basis of merit. They should be evaluated.
- Encourage excellence and creativity.
- Career management is a huge issue for corporations and communities. It should not be the responsibility of schools.
- Focus on the learning system, not on educational institutions. The point is that we need better opportunities to learn. In the 21st century, you don't have to be in a classroom to learn.

RECOGNIZE DIVERSITY.

IV Ensure that Alberta's economic development strategy recognizes the diversity within the province—capitalizing on the opportunities this presents and addressing the challenges.

Future Summit delegates emphasized that, in matters of economic strategy, the principle that "one size fits all" does not apply. Growth, land use and funding were identified as key issues for urban policy development. Attracting, retaining and developing businesses and services were key issues for the development of rural economic policy.

1. Develop a people plan that allows Albertans to share in the province's prosperity. The plan should help individuals achieve personal growth and financial security. It should attract people to the province and encourage them to make Alberta their home.
   - *Ensure that the plan considers the diversity of Alberta's people and includes appropriate strategies for the province's rural, urban and Aboriginal communities.*

2. Develop an economic framework that outlines strategies, policy, infrastructure and land use plans, governance models, and funding instruments.
   - *Ensure that the framework addresses regional concerns.*
   - *Establish timelines and assign responsibilities.*
   - *Consider the use of community bonds to finance local research and development and industrial expansion.*

3. Create economic development strategies for rural and northern Alberta.
   - *Strategies should encompass human resources, infrastructure and transportation. They should include oil and gas, forestry and water resources, where appropriate.*

4. Implement and fund an economic development policy framework for Alberta's Aboriginal peoples.
   - *Key issues include resolving land claims and clarifying federal and provincial jurisdiction over Aboriginal issues.*

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Complete the Alberta SuperNet to provide e-business services for rural Alberta.
- Deregulate the operation of small businesses to provide incentives for growth, partnerships and exporting.
- Ensure an adequate supply of serviced, commercial land for small business development in rural Alberta.
- Use the skilled labour potential of Aboriginal people. Work toward full employment of Aboriginals.
- The economy of Alberta must be developed beyond the Highway #2 corridor. This will develop communities, protect the environment and improve the quality of life for Albertans.
- Strategies should be designed for everyone.

FOSTER ENTREPRENEURSHIP.

V Create and sustain a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation.

1. Teach entrepreneurial skills to young Albertans. Add business basics and ethics to the curriculum.

2. Foster an environment that promotes research and development. Maintain and expand research capabilities. Encourage small and medium-sized enterprises to increase their investments in applied research.

3. Provide funding, support systems and mentorship to promote and encourage innovation—from the initial research and development stages all the way through to the commercialization of research results.

4. Ensure that Alberta's research, development and technology commercialization efforts have an international focus.

5. Institute appropriate reward systems.

6. Improve access to venture capital from external as well as local Alberta sources.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Think outside the box with regard to research and development. Fund applied research at colleges and technical institutes. Fund basic research at universities.
- Permit private degree-granting universities on the condition that they locate somewhere other than Edmonton and Calgary. This would attract research and development ventures to those places.
- Innovation is not just research and development. Innovation must be understood as the utilization of high-quality knowledge in every area of life. This will "take us out of the box."
- Conduct a labour market analysis for all industry sectors.
- The government needs to put less money into job creation and more into the small businesses that have suffered from cutbacks.

The following material was compiled from input provided by over 4,000 Albertans who took part in the initial Future Summit consultations (September–December 2001). In many cases, this material supports the strategies developed by Summit delegates. It also includes a number of alternative viewpoints and approaches which should be considered.

The Economic Drivers of the Future

Albertans identified four major economic drivers.

- diversification of the economy
  - *Responses typically mentioned alternative energy, high tech, information technology, manufacturing (value-added processing), services and tourism. Small business was also important.*

- strategy
  - *While Albertans mentioned specific sectors, their responses tended to refer to goals or to elements that needed to be in place in order to achieve certain goals. Key strategies included education, research and development, and health. Albertans saw education as the way to realize new opportunities and diversify our province's economy.*

- traditional industries
  - *Albertans mentioned the need for continued development of the province's energy, forestry, agriculture and transportation sectors.*

- quality of life
  - *Albertans mentioned a balanced lifestyle, the environment, recreation and culture (including the arts, entertainment and libraries).*

Albertans felt strongly about the need to diversify the economy through manufacturing and other value-added activities. Many suggested that Alberta should aggressively and urgently pursue the development of alternative energy sources such as wind and solar power. Many believed that economic development must be balanced with environmental sustainability and suggested that Alberta should develop its digital infrastructure and improve access to it, particularly for rural Albertans.

Many Albertans emphasized that economic development must not be pursued at the expense of quality of life. They noted that the arts, entertainment, libraries and other aspects of our heritage and culture contribute not only to society, but to the economy as well.

Albertans identified **diversification** as the key to future economic prosperity. They identified four emerging sectors as having the potential to drive Alberta's economy in the future:

- high tech
  - *Biotechnology, nanotechnology, the software industry, the computer industry and telecommunications were identified as important new growth areas.*

- tourism
  - *Many respondents made reference to ecotourism and to the splendour of Alberta's environment, which attracts tourists to our province. They identified tourism as a "clean" industry and a good target for diversification.*

- alternative energy
  - *Alberta should diversify away from nonrenewable resources and focus on developing alternative energy sources such as wind, solar power and hydrogen-based energy.*

- new energy-related industries and services
  - *Albertans saw opportunities to innovate and leverage the province's current strengths in the traditional energy sector to develop new technologies, goods and services for export. They emphasized the need to diversify the economy and extract more value from natural resources through manufacturing and other value-added activities.*

Many Albertans mentioned **education**—and by extension, an educated, knowledgeable workforce—as key to Alberta's continued competitiveness. Research and development and health were also identified as important strategies. Some respondents argued that a healthy population was in itself an economic driver. Some saw health care as an industry—and a source of innovation, technology and economic activity.

Albertans recognized that the further development of the province's economic strategy depends on many factors, including:

- increasing exports
- fostering innovation
- improving infrastructure (both physical and digital)
- coping with globalization
- attracting investment
- managing population growth
- increasing immigration

Albertans believed **traditional industries** will still be important in the future. They believed that agriculture, forestry, oil sands, coal, transportation and mining will continue to play an important role in Alberta's economy. However, these sectors will need to adapt and innovate to remain competitive in an increasingly global marketplace.

Albertans believed that activities which contribute to our **quality of life** will also play a role in ensuring future prosperity. They identified the following elements in relation to quality of life: the environment, recreation, sustainability, access to information, the arts, entertainment, a balanced lifestyle, libraries and museums.

Strengthening Our Economic and Business Advantages

Albertans recommended three strategies for strengthening the economy: increasing competitiveness, improving the business climate, and fostering a balanced approach.

competitiveness

Albertans saw competitiveness as an internally focused strategy. They believed Alberta could improve its competitiveness by making improvements in the following areas:

- education
- community
- diversification
- infrastructure
- environment

the business climate

Improving the business climate was perceived as an externally focused strategy which would help make Alberta attractive to outside investors, trading partners, opinion-makers and immigrants. Albertans identified the following related topics:

- tax structure (usually, lowering taxes)
- decreased or more constructive regulation
- better marketing of the Alberta Advantage
- improved trade
- increased immigration
- better cooperation between economic development agencies and all orders of government

a balanced approach

Albertans pointed out the need for a balanced approach to economic development. They appreciated Alberta's low tax rates and the opportunities low taxes afford. They also realized that low taxation is sometimes achieved at the expense of social programs.

Adjusting to Natural Resource Revenue Volatility

Albertans proposed several strategies for consideration. These ranged from establishing a "rainy day fund" to conservative budgeting.

saving, investing and special funds

Some Albertans proposed that the government should save money in boom years and make prudent investments to carry the economy through bad times. They recognized the importance of maintaining institutions and infrastructure even during economic downturns.

Many Albertans suggested that the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund could be used to smooth revenue flows: part of the fund could be set aside for long-term investments and part could serve as a reserve to address short-term fluctuations of resource revenues. Some Albertans proposed that the interest earned on investments could be used to reduce taxes.

Some Albertans advocated the establishment of a revenue equalizer account or "rainy day fund." They saw this as a well-managed reserve fund which could cushion the economy against sharp fluctuations in natural resource revenues. The fund could serve either as a contingency fund or as an endowment fund, depending on circumstances.

Some Albertans proposed that a revenue pool could serve a similar function. When revenues exceeded a certain fixed, long-term average price of oil, they could be held in reserve. When royalty revenues and current prices were below average, the accumulated reserves could be paid out.

Albertans proposed several other options to adjust to the volatility of natural resource revenues:

- the use of long-term contracts or financial derivatives (futures and options) to hedge a portion of future royalties
- the use of bonds to finance infrastructure spending in down times, and the use of windfalls to pay down bonds

conservative budgeting

Many Albertans advocated a conservative approach to provincial budgeting. They proposed that budgets be prepared on a multi-year basis and cautioned against overspending based on uncertain revenue projections. Many suggested that budgets be based on long-term average prices for oil and gas.

Some Albertans believed that revenues from nonrenewable resources should be seen as windfalls. They felt that windfall revenues should not be used to cover operating expenses or to fund core programs. Rather, the surpluses from high-revenue years should be spent on one-time capital investment and infrastructure projects such as recreation facilities, libraries, theatres, schools, hospitals, roads, transportation and communication networks, and research.

royalty in kind

Some Albertans proposed taking natural resource royalties in kind—that is, keeping and stockpiling a share of the actual oil or natural gas. They suggested that this approach would be particularly appropriate in periods when resource prices were low.

> ***With the new and proposed pipelines, volatility is here to stay in the natural resources sector. We will be subject to world pricing on these commodities. The option is not to adjust to the volatility, but to take advantage of the surplus to stimulate growth and provide a stabilizing influence on the economy. A shift away from reliance on natural resource companies and their service sector is necessary to provide stabilization of the overall tax base, which is really the goal. New technology companies and tourism are a few examples of industries to mitigate the cyclical natural resource economy.***
>
> Future Summit Workbook Submission
> Age Category: 45–54
> Calgary

Learning

Background

Alberta is nationally and internationally recognized for the excellence of its schools and postsecondary institutions.

Alberta's learning system has the following goals:

- providing accessible, affordable, high-quality learning opportunities
- attaining excellence in learner achievement
- graduating lifelong learners who are good citizens and who are well prepared for the workplace

Albertans have high levels of educational attainment, and employment rates for Alberta's graduates remain high. Maintaining and improving on these high standards are challenges for the future. The following issues will need to be addressed.

- education–employment links
  - *Education and employment rates are directly related. Between 1990 and 2000, employment rates for people with university degrees increased by 45%. Employment rates for people with postsecondary diplomas or certificates jumped by 52%. In the same period, employment rates for people with less than a high school education fell by 13%. Albertans who have a higher-than-average incidence of unemployment may need to upgrade their education and access vocational training programs before they can actively participate in tomorrow's economy.*

- lifelong learning
  - *In the future, most new jobs will require postsecondary education or training. Providing quality, accessible postsecondary education to a larger proportion of the population will be costly. The growing need for people to engage in ongoing training and continued lifelong learning will add to the pressure.*

- technology
  - *Technology makes it possible to share library, information and research resources. Integrating new technologies into the classroom enhances the educational experience, but often comes at a significant cost. The challenge is to continue to use technology in a way that broadens and extends access to information to Alberta's remote communities.*

- attrition
    - *At the same time that educational institutions are expanding to meet increased enrolments, Alberta will need to replace large numbers of staff who will leave the workforce when the first wave of baby boomers reaches retirement age. Alberta will need to compete with other jurisdictions—both in Canada and in the US—to attract teachers, professors and other professional staff to its learning communities.*

During the Future Summit consultations, Albertans identified a number of concerns with the current learning system and proposed options for addressing these. Albertans' concerns related to the accessibility of learning opportunities, education costs, class size and perceived disparities based on geographic location.

Albertans' Vision

The following vision for learning is a composite of Summit delegates' views and the views of the 4,000 Albertans who voiced their opinions during the initial Summit consultations (September–December 2001).

When Albertans think about the future, they would like to see accessible, affordable, high-quality learning opportunities that equip Albertans for the challenges of modern-day society. Education is valued. Alberta's citizens are well educated and have lifelong learning opportunities. Individuals have achieved their potential and contribute to building an inclusive, democratic community.

In the Alberta of the future

Education is an investment. Well-educated citizens help to build a stronger economy and a better, more prosperous, democratic society. Individuals, families, corporations, governments and communities are partners in education.

Albertans value education and encourage learning for its own sake. They are committed to lifelong learning. They have the time and the necessary support to pursue educational opportunities. And they have equitable access to skills development, professional development and trade-related education.

Alberta's education system is learner centred: it provides learners with flexibility and a diversity of choices. Alternative, technology-based delivery of programs and services complements traditional learning delivery models. Citizens across the province have equitable access to affordable learning opportunities that meet their particular needs.

Alberta has an internationally recognized, world-class education system with state-of-the-art facilities and infrastructure, including high-speed communication networks. The education system across the province is supported by adequate fiscal resources as well as quality human and content resources.

Alberta's children and all Albertans benefit from the best education system and learning opportunities the province can provide.

Future Summit delegates identified a number of obstacles that Albertans will need to overcome in order to realize this vision of the future. They developed a corresponding list of opportunities.

Obstacles

- There is a tension between Albertans who advocate public educational delivery and those who support private education in terms of who pays for what. There is a lack of consensus between interest groups. Vested interests, competing priorities, sustained conflict among stakeholders, unions, and silos within the government all create obstacles for learning.
- The learning system faces funding constraints due to an aging population, a smaller tax base, the increasing cost of services and revenue volatility. Consistent, sustainable funding is required.
- The system suffers from inertia due to traditional thinking, resistance to change and public apathy.
- Talent retention is a challenge. Increasing globalization and the portability of skills make it more difficult to retain staff.
- A large percentage of Alberta's teachers are retiring. Finding skilled replacements will be a challenge.

- Poverty and socio-economic variables such as a lack of family support, poor health, a lack of knowledge about wellness and nutrition, financial difficulties and language or cultural differences pose challenges for learning.
- Alberta's infrastructure is aging.
- Our education systems are not sustainable over the long term. Our options are investing now or paying later.
- The cost of providing training in industries such as the oil and gas sector is very high.
- Alberta needs to integrate the skills of immigrants (including doctors and other foreign-trained professionals).
- There is a lack of outcome-oriented long-term planning. The education system tries to be everything to everyone.
- There is a lack of knowledge about the present and future needs of students. There is a lack of knowledge about labour market trends.
- Expectations do not match current reality.
- Learners in many rural communities are isolated. There is a shortage of professionals willing to teach in remote areas.
- Knowledge and technology are changing at a rapid pace.
- Different learning models are required.

Opportunities

- There is a growing recognition of the importance of lifelong learning. There are opportunities to make education more learner centred, to increase personal commitment to learning, and to increase citizens' participation in a democratic society.
- New electronic infrastructure such as the SuperNet supports alternate delivery systems.
- Alberta can attract new businesses based on the strength of the province's learning opportunities.
- There are opportunities for partnerships and for including the public in planning and decision making.
- Innovation offers new ideas, methods and approaches to learning.
- Increased funding provides increased opportunities, but a lack of funding promotes change and problem solving.
- Alberta has an entrepreneurial spirit.
- Alberta's curriculum is varied. The liberal arts are balanced with math and science.
- Alberta has early intervention programs for children from 0–6 years of age.

- Alberta has a diverse, multicultural and multilingual population.
- Outreach programs for high school dropouts provide alternatives to traditional high schools.
- Alberta has a well-educated population and a broad base of shared values.
- Alberta has the advantage of inspired leadership in both the corporate and the public sectors.
- Alberta has a history of achievement and the will to succeed.
- Schools can serve as multi-purpose facilities.
- Alberta has an educational leadership program.
- Increasing globalization and portability of skills make it easier for Alberta to attract talent.

Guiding Principles

Education promotes the development of active, engaged citizens who participate in Alberta's democracy and have opportunities to fulfill their potential.

Affordable, relevant, high-quality, lifelong learning opportunities must be available to all Albertans. Access to education must be universal and equitable. The barriers to learning must be removed.

Learning is a lifelong endeavour. Albertans need access to a variety of learning opportunities in a wide range of disciplines—from self-improvement training to academics and workplace preparation.

Education must be learner centred. Long-range planning for education must be a dynamic process that anticipates and meets the changing and diverse needs of learners. Accountability, innovation, flexibility and responsiveness are key. The learning system must aspire to excellence and outcomes must be measured against world-class standards and benchmarks.

Alberta's investment in learning must be sustainable over the long term and sustainable within the context of the provincial economy. There must be a dynamic balance between Alberta's investment in learning and investments in other programs and sectors.

Strategies and Ideas for Action

The following is a summary of delegates' deliberations at the Alberta Future Summit 2002 in Red Deer, February 4–5, 2002. In most cases, the strategies had the support of all the delegates in the Learning group. There was less consensus about some of the specific ideas for action.

IDENTIFY LEARNERS' NEEDS.

I Identify learners' needs and develop learning opportunities that serve the needs of a diverse public.

1. Establish a task force to study education and learning.

2. Engage Albertans in a dialogue to identify current and future learning needs.

3. Develop mechanisms to identify and support a diversity of needs and circumstances, including regional, community and individuals' special needs.

4. Assess the need for early intervention programs and identify resources to implement what is needed.

5. Develop short- and long-term plans to ensure that Alberta has sufficient postsecondary education capacity in the future.

6. Research learning outcomes so that systems can be redesigned to meet the needs of learners and society.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Learning starts at the age of three. Prekindergarten programs such as Headstart are our best opportunities to develop better learners and citizens. These programs must be widely available and adequately funded to ensure excellence and quality.
- Improve efficiency. Focus on results and accountability. Monitor results.

- The goal of education must be to fulfill the learning capacity of the individual, not just to reach a specific certificate, diploma or degree.
- Equitable access to education is needed both in rural and urban areas.
- There seems to be a focus on K–12 learning. What about lifelong learning?

DEVELOP RELEVANT CURRICULUM.

II Develop adaptable, innovative curriculum that reflects the current social context and meets the needs of individual learners of all ages.

1. Create and implement a curriculum review process to ensure the relevance of what is taught.
   - *Depending on learners' and society's needs, relevant curriculum might deal with life skills training and parenting skills, basic literacy, the labour market and career planning, the environment, health and wellness, English as a Second Language (ESL), French or other second languages, and trades.*

2. Implement regular reviews of the curricula used to train Alberta's teachers.

3. Ensure that learning curricula are inclusive, accommodate special needs, and respect diversity.

4. Establish a provincial initiative for Aboriginal teacher preparation.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Remove the repetitive parts of the curriculum and add useful courses like financial and business management. Increase the focus on science, applied science and the arts.
- Integrate curricula so that subjects are more interconnected and there is more real-world application.
- Develop curriculum in cooperation with teachers.

- Promote the importance of knowing more than one language. More language education is needed to support success in a global economy.
- Find a way to encourage francophone Albertans to continue their education in French.
- Include education about the environment in the K–12 curriculum as well as at university level. The result will be that concern for the environment is second nature for Alberta's young people. This will have ramifications for the health system and the economy.
- Learning needs to connect with wellness. Include wellness activities in the curriculum.
- Teach citizenship, volunteerism and social responsibility.
- Basic literacy is required. Upgrade the requirements for basic skills such as spelling, grammar and articulating ideas.
- Consult with agencies such as the First Nations Higher Education Consortium.
- We need less mainstreaming and more programs for gifted and atypical students.
- Connect community education with trades or other forms of learning.
- The Alberta curriculum should be more inclusive. It should help immigrant students adjust as well as providing language skills. Since Alberta needs immigrants to sustain our economy, we should take another look at the needs of immigrants. It is more cost effective to address these needs when new immigrants arrive rather than later.
- Foster conflict-resolution skills at all levels.
- Our attitudes must change. Success in a trade should be valued. We should not just focus on university training.
- Use workplace co-ops to enhance the learning experience.
- Involve nontraditional educational groups (4-H clubs, Boys' and Girls' Club, Scouts Canada, Native Councils and others) directly in the school system.
- Ensure that teachers have adequate knowledge of their subject areas. (A lot of French Immersion teachers come out of university without a working knowledge of the language.)
- Change the way teachers are educated at universities.
- Provide extensive in-service training for teachers.
- Help skilled newcomers (doctors and teachers) contribute to the economy. Professional associations bar entry.
- Focus on the learning system, not on educational institutions. The point is that we need better opportunities to learn. In the 21st century, you don't have to be in a classroom to learn.

ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO LEARNING.

III Identify and remove barriers to ensure that all Albertans can access learning opportunities.

1. Improve Alberta's literacy rate. Develop strategies to address literacy problems.

2. Address the socio-economic conditions that affect student success. Invest in family support services.

REVIEW DELIVERY AND GOVERNANCE.

IV Explore and develop innovative governance and delivery models.

1. Conduct a full review of the roles of different stakeholders immediately. Develop recommendations to ensure financial efficiency and eliminate redundancies.

2. Consolidate institutions and boards to take advantage of economies of scale.

3. Implement an incentive program to encourage learning partnerships that will enhance and support learning excellence, eliminate unnecessary duplication and make the best use of funds and facilities.

4. Expand the Campus Alberta concept.

5. Create a Charter of Rights and Responsibilities with regard to education and learning.

6. Review and re-evaluate the roles of public, private and charter schools.

7. Create alternative learning centres and interactive learning environments.

8. Draw on innovative learning models and nontraditional expertise. Draw on the expertise of seniors and other community members.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Schools need to improve communication and involve parents and the community.
- Look at communities where innovative partnerships are already in place and use these as a model. For example, industry is very involved in education in the Municipality of Wood Buffalo (Fort McMurray).
- Provide incentives for experienced teachers to work in rural areas.
- Small rural schools are closing and ought not to be. This adds to rural depopulation.
- Develop an awareness program to promote partnerships in learning. Create incentives for corporate partnerships.
- Support nonprofit organizations to develop community programs.
- Establish a business model for evaluating and ensuring the accountability of teachers.
- Promote industry–institution partnerships to support trade education and classroom learning.

FOSTER INNOVATION AND EXCELLENCE.

V Allocate resources to foster research, innovation, excellence and continuous improvement.

1. Build an innovative society by supporting research and development in a broad range of disciplines.

2. Continue to develop and fund a provincial research plan. Increase funding for learning research.

3. Encourage and support continuous learning to build a society that can adapt to change.

4. Establish centres of excellence to help Albertans develop knowledge and skills in traditional and nontraditional disciplines.

5. Reward effective innovation.

6. Create leadership programs for managing change.

INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE.

VI Apply well-established, prudent standards to determine and implement the appropriate investment needed to maintain and manage existing infrastructure.

1. Ensure that existing infrastructure is used as efficiently as possible.
   - *Use empty or underused school facilities as multi-purpose community or seniors' centres.*

The following comment was made by a delegate during the Summit gallery walk.

- Underused facilities should be closed unless they can be redeployed effectively. We need to focus on educational outcomes and preserve precious dollars for this, not for bricks and mortar.

INVEST IN TECHNOLOGY.

VII Invest in innovative technologies that support a broad range of learning opportunities.

1. Complete the Alberta SuperNet—an important tool that will facilitate the distance delivery of learning.

2. Identify needs and allocate funds and resources to develop and deliver e-based learning.

3. Adopt and implement infrastructure standards that support technology-based course delivery.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Establish an advisory committee on educational technology.
- Technology is only a vehicle. It provides a delivery mechanism. The real need is to develop web content that is not narrowly curriculum based.
- Schools cannot be expected to focus on alternative learning when the government evaluates schools on the basis of grades and marks.
- Create alternative education opportunities for remote communities.
- Prepare educators for the transition to e-learning, where curriculum is free, contemporary and accessible to everyone.

PROVIDE ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR EDUCATION.

VIII Develop a funding and policy framework to support accessible, affordable, high-quality learning opportunities that equip Albertans for the challenges of the future.

1. Ensure that learners in financial need have the opportunity to access education beyond Grade 12.
   - *Eliminate financial barriers by increasing the availability of needs-based awards.*
   - *Introduce a "Learning Affinity Credit Card." Participating merchants would contribute a portion of the value of purchases charged to the card to a tuition fund.*

2. Provide incentives for communities, corporate sponsors and private donors to finance scholarships and provide funding for postsecondary education.

3. Establish funding partnerships between schools and the private sector.

4. Provide learning facilitators with the resources they need to work with diverse learners.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Corporate sponsorships must be for add-ons, not for basics within schools. Do not download public (government) responsibility to the private sector.
- Provide adequate funding so that schools and teachers can maintain up-to-date resources and curriculum without spending time and resources trying to get extra dollars. Schools should not have to be distracted from their work by having to fundraise.
- Consider using gaming money to fund education.
- Maintain a publicly funded education system.
- Any group that can provide equal or better education in the private sector should be equally funded.
- Provide government-funded scholarships and bursaries to encourage high school students to continue their education.
- Eliminate school-based budgeting.
- Provide funding for graduate research in science, engineering and the arts.
- Provide financial assistance to parents who want to teach their own children.

The following material was compiled from input provided by over 4,000 Albertans who took part in the initial Future Summit consultations (September–December 2001). In many cases, this material supports the strategies developed by Summit delegates. It also includes a number of alternative viewpoints and approaches which should be considered.

Albertans recognized that education—in its many forms—is the primary method for acquiring and developing needed skills. They saw education, learning and upgrading as investments that have long-term benefits for the province as a whole.

Lifelong Learning

Albertans listed lifelong learning as the most significant mechanism for learning and acquiring skills and training for the future. While they recognized the importance of lifelong learning, some Albertans felt there was a need to promote the availability of learning opportunities in general. They believed this would help to create a "culture of learning" in Alberta.

Albertans recognized lifelong learning—whether on the job, through distance education, or at a traditional bricks-and-mortar institution—as key to success in the new, knowledge-based economy. As such, they saw investment in lifelong learning as an investment in the future of the province and its citizens.

Accessibility to lifelong learning opportunities was of concern to some Albertans, who suggested that learning opportunities must be flexible in terms of:

- scheduling
  - *Working Albertans who wish to attend evening classes should have opportunities to do so.*

- content
  - *Lifelong learning opportunities must be flexible enough to change with shifting economic and social priorities.*

- delivery
  - *Lifelong learning need not occur only in a traditional classroom environment: it must also occur on the job.*

Distance learning was proposed as an ideal tool for continuous learning. Distance learning was particularly important to Albertans from rural areas.

Some Albertans recommended using incentives to encourage adults to improve their skills and continue to learn throughout their lives. Some suggested that employers have a role to play in providing learning opportunities for their staff. They felt the government could encourage the development of employer training programs by providing tax breaks or other financial incentives.

Education

Most Albertans recognized that the current basic learning system plays an important role in providing Albertans with essential skills. They saw postsecondary learning as being important for enhancing these skills and allowing individuals to make the most of their future. They saw the government playing a significant role in developing, promoting and providing first-class learning opportunities.

Albertans believed that the education system—in schools, postsecondary institutions and beyond—must be of the highest quality. They felt that a high-quality education system produces superior students and attracts the best teachers and faculty.

Curriculum

Albertans offered a range of opinions on curriculum content. While some advocated a "back to basics approach," many believed that preparing Albertans for the needs of tomorrow required more than the traditional 3 Rs. Some proposed that students needed a broad base of skills and training that would prepare them for the world of work. Some advocated a liberal arts education, which would broaden perspectives and encourage critical thinking. Some proposed that life skills such as money management, budgeting and family planning should be taught as part of the curriculum.

Accessibility and Affordability

For most Albertans who identified specific concerns about the learning system, the issue of accessibility was paramount. Many expressed a perception that postsecondary education in particular is inaccessible to a significant number of Albertans. They suggested that ensuring accessibility for all Albertans was a role of government.

The issue of accessibility was closely linked with concerns about affordability. Some Albertans felt that the high cost of obtaining a college diploma, university degree or trades certificate deterred individuals from pursuing postsecondary studies.

Tuition and tuition increases were highlighted as being the most significant factors affecting cost and affordability. Some Albertans suggested that lower tuition costs would permit a more diverse student population, with representation from all economic backgrounds. They proposed lowering or freezing current tuition levels, creating new scholarships and bursaries, and revisiting current loan and loan remission policies to make higher education more affordable.

A significant minority of Albertans took the issue of affordability a step further, recommending that postsecondary education, skills development and training should be free. Suggestions for how current fiscal realities could accommodate a free education system were not presented.

A small minority of Albertans raised the issue of free education from Kindergarten through Grade 12. This may indicate unfamiliarity with the education system or a general unhappiness with the current funding model.

Class Size

For many Albertans, the issue of K–12 class sizes was of high importance. Many felt that the average student–teacher ratio was too high, with the result that teachers could not give adequate attention to individual pupils in the course of an average school day. Large class sizes in the earlier grades were of particular concern.

A Public Education System

Many Albertans emphasized that education must remain in the public domain. Some felt that privatization should not be permitted. Some believed that private schools reinforce social differences, while others were concerned that private schools negatively affect instruction. Some Albertans felt it was desirable to have choices other than just public education.

In a time of drastic change it is the learners who inherit the future.

— Eric Hoffer, philosopher and author of *Reflections on the Human Condition*

Fiscal Responsibility

Background

The Government of Alberta defines fiscal responsibility according to the following guidelines.

- Budgets will be balanced every year.
- Debt will be repaid.
- Revenue forecasts will be prudent.
- Spending plans will be affordable.
- The government will be open and accountable to Albertans.

Albertans define fiscal responsibility in terms of:

- living within our means
  - *The Government of Alberta has maintained a good track record of balancing its budgets. It has created a competitive business tax regime and an efficient regulatory environment.*
  - *By law, the government must eliminate the province's debt by March 2025 and is on track to do this sooner.*

- investing wisely and saving for the future
  - *The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, created in 1976, is currently valued at $12.5 billion. This represents more than $4,000 for every citizen of the province.*

- spending on program areas that serve the people of Alberta
  - *The Government of Alberta spends money on its three core businesses—People, Prosperity and Preservation—which enhance the quality of life for Albertans.*

Alberta's fiscal landscape is affected by:

1. resource revenue volatility
   - *Typically, 15% to 25% of total government revenues are derived from oil and gas, which account for between 50% to 60% of Alberta's total exports. The volatility of oil and gas prices has a significant impact on government revenues and on the health of Alberta's economy.*

2. changing demographics
   - *Over the next 25 years, Alberta's population of seniors will almost double. Such demographic changes will have an impact on the province's housing market, social services, recreation and health care.*

3. sustainable program spending
   - *Maintaining sustainable spending on programs is important for Albertans, and there is a need to find the appropriate balance between tax levels and services.*

Albertans' Vision

The following vision for fiscal responsibility was put forward by delegates at the Alberta Future Summit 2002, Red Deer, February 4–5, 2002.

Good fiscal management is not an accident. It happens by design.

When Albertans think about the future, they would like to see careful planning, management and prudent forecasting. The government operates within a more predictable fiscal environment. Expenditures are controlled and, in good times, something is put aside to cope with swings in revenue. Individual Albertans take responsibility for contributing to their society.

In the Alberta of the future

Albertans constantly challenge themselves and others to find new and better ways of being fiscally responsible. With careful planning, management and prudent forecasting, the government operates within a more predictable fiscal environment.

The Alberta Government is fiscally responsible. Not only are operational budgets balanced, but the financing of infrastructure and other capital projects is looked at over both the short and the long term, as appropriate. The budgeting process is solid and transparent.

The Alberta Government pursues economic growth and manages expenditures through the use of business plans and key performance indicators. Fiscal plans and standards are developed with a long-term view: they are not tied to election cycles. Alberta's performance is internationally recognized as being best in class.

Albertans live within their means. Expenditures are controlled and, in good times, something is put aside to cope with swings in revenue.

Alberta has a globally competitive taxation system which encourages economic growth.

Albertans ensure there are resources to meet the needs of citizens. They believe that resources are not just dollars.

There is a link between payment for resources and the use of those resources.

Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood. Individual Albertans take responsibility for contributing to their society.

Future Summit delegates identified a number of obstacles that Albertans will need to overcome in order to realize this vision of the future. They developed a corresponding list of opportunities.

Obstacles

- Alberta's leaders are reactive, not proactive. There is a lack of innovation and a reluctance to take bold steps.
- Different Albertans have different priorities and expectations. Individuals bring a variety of personal agendas to the bargaining table. There is a perception that "the government is responsible for everything."
- There is a perceived lack of transparency and accountability in government accounting processes.
- Planning horizons are too short.
- Government programs are sometimes inefficient and there may be duplication of services or gaps in service. There is also a lack of shared services between the orders of government.
- Changing demographics, jurisdictional barriers and barriers to labour mobility pose challenges for fiscal responsibility.

- There was a common understanding among delegates that either adopting or rejecting the Kyoto Protocol is an obstacle.
- Expectations with regard to the health care system have not been managed. Albertans have failed to consider health care and education as investments.
- Alberta is dependent on a resource-based market economy—selling unprocessed resources rather than value-added products.
- Public assets such as water and air are undervalued.
- Alberta needs a better range of infrastructure, including transportation networks, to support a diverse economy.

Opportunities

- Alberta has a highly educated workforce and the opportunity to train and retain "the best and the brightest."
- Retaining the participation of older citizens and increasing the participation of Aboriginals offer the potential to increase the size of our skilled labour force.
- Albertans' high quality of life attracts skilled people to the province.
- Alberta can market its strong education system.
- A strong private sector can serve as an educator and contribute to skill development.
- Alberta has an externally focused business community and is geographically close to US markets.
- Most production costs are paid in Canadian dollars, but export revenues are in US dollars.
- Alberta has the opportunity to export processes and technology.
- Albertans have a strong entrepreneurial spirit.
- Alberta is well positioned to take advantage of the knowledge-based economy and global communications.
- Alberta enjoys a competitive tax regime and has no deficits.
- Alberta has good infrastructure—transportation, communication, government and legal.
- Alberta has a reputation as a world leader in oil and gas.
- Tourism and natural resources provide opportunities for sustainable economic growth.
- The Alberta Government has a strong mandate to take a long-range view.
- There is an opportunity to smooth out the peaks and valleys of government spending.
- Public input through forums like the Future Summit generates new ideas and approaches.

Guiding Principles

Summit delegates identified a number of principles which provide the foundation for fiscal responsibility.

Fiscal plans must have a long-term focus—beyond the four-year election cycle. They must be proactive rather than reactive. This approach includes an element of risk-taking. It requires innovation in response to new opportunities.

Fiscal responsibility and program priorities are closely intertwined. Fiscal plans must consider the effects of fiscal policy on other areas.

Governments are accountable for results. Accountability means that government processes are transparent. Key performance indicators ensure that identified needs are met in the best possible way. Communication lines are open and information is readily shared with individuals, government agencies, corporations and the nonprofit sector.

Being frugal in good times to support the bad times is an important element of fiscal responsibility.

Fiscal responsibility is everyone's business. Citizens, governments, corporations and nonprofit agencies must show leadership and be engaged in the process.

Fiscal responsibility requires a cooperative approach. Partnerships and relationships can improve efficiency and maximize effectiveness.

> ***Prosperity can only be realized through proper and planned management... Just as the debt is one problem that should not be passed on to future generations, new problems that are created by cutting too deep should be avoided as well. A long term, balanced approach—rather than short-term, single minded goals—should be [the focus].***
>
> Future Summit Workbook Submission
> Age Category: 25–34
> Grand Prairie

Strategies and Ideas for Action

The following is a summary of delegates' deliberations at the Alberta Future Summit 2002 in Red Deer, February 4–5, 2002. In most cases, the strategies had the support of all the delegates in the Fiscal Responsibility group. There was less consensus about some of the specific ideas for action.

SMOOTH OUT GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES.

I Stabilize spending on programs and services by smoothing out government expenditures over economic and commodity price cycles.

Stable government expenditures depend on stable revenues. Summit delegates proposed that short-term revenue stability could be achieved with a revenue stabilization fund. Long-term revenue stability could be achieved through the establishment of endowments.

1. Establish policies and a long-term plan for stabilizing government expenditures.
   - *Establish steady, reliable funding for key programs such as health care, education, and family and social services. Consult with communities, the private sector and nonprofit agencies to define service needs and appropriate core funding levels for these programs.*
   - *Design fixed funding formulas.*

2. Support long-term program plans and flatten out the business cycle by maintaining stable revenue levels.

3. Create a **revenue stabilization fund** to facilitate consistent government expenditures even when revenue cycles fluctuate.
   - *When revenue reserves are higher than what is required to meet planned expenditure needs, invest the surplus into the fund. In times of reduced revenue, use money from the fund to keep expenditures at the required levels.*
   - *Be conservative on revenue projections prepared for budget purposes.*
   - *Balance saving for fluctuations in resource revenue with debt repayment.*

Some delegates believed that current legislation should be modified to permit annual deficits when revenues are insufficient to maintain the required levels of spending on core programs and services. Other delegates believed that deficits should never be permitted.

4. Establish specific endowments to support strategic areas.

5. Build up the Heritage Fund until it is large enough to provide sufficient income to replace what the government now takes from Albertans in the form of income tax.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Develop and implement a taxation structure that supports sustainable long-term programs.
- Explore internal financing versus bank borrowing when addressing capital deficit planning.

MAINTAIN NO-DEFICIT BUDGETS.

II Maintain responsible, no-deficit budgeting practices.

Not all the delegates in the Fiscal Responsibility group supported this strategy and the accompanying ideas for action.

1. Continue to uphold the *Fiscal Accountability Act*. Maintain balanced budgets based on a no-deficit approach.

2. Continue to pay down the debt.
   - *Use an accounting definition of capital and operating budgets and debts.*

3. Avoid incurring new debt.

Comments for and against no-deficit budgets were expressed during the Summit gallery walk.

- It is not appropriate to achieve no-deficit budgets at the cost of not meeting citizens' needs.
- Albertans have come to value fiscal responsibility. We have sacrificed too much to allow uncontrolled spending now. Invest in education.

ELIMINATE THE DEBT.

III Eliminate the debt.

Differences of opinion were expressed with regard to this strategy. Consensus was not reached.

1. Use the $12.5 billion dollars in the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund. Use $6 billion to pay off the debt and some of the balance to create tax incentives for valued-added industries.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- The Heritage Fund is being utilized. It provides scholarships, funding for events and infrastructure, and a host of other important functions. To eliminate it would be a terrible mistake.
- Set a semi-long-term debt payment plan so that resources can be focused on sustainable development and on generating larger revenues in the future.

INVEST IN EDUCATION.

IV Invest in Alberta's future success by investing in education today.

Investing in education today assures success for tomorrow.

Alberta needs self-reliant citizens and a skilled, educated workforce:

- to meet labour market needs now and in the future
- to reduce pressures on the social system, now and in the future

Summit delegates outlined several ideas for action to help Alberta achieve these goals.

1. Invest in infrastructure to ensure that Albertans can access the learning opportunities they need.
    - *Provide the human and financial resources needed to speed the development of Alberta's SuperNet and to train people in its use.*
    - *Ensure that the education system is supported by a solid research base which can facilitate the creation and transfer of new knowledge.*

2. Develop partnerships with industry. Provide tax incentives to encourage businesses—especially small and medium-sized enterprises—to participate in training a skilled workforce to meet future demand.

3. Support Campus Alberta.

4. Develop life skills, training and education programs that instill self-reliance in Albertans and meet the future needs of the labour market.
   - *Make these programs available to Albertans from kindergarten age to retirement.*
   - *Teach Albertans to take care of their own educational, health and wellness, and investing needs.*
   - *Strive to achieve and promote excellence in education. Develop centres of excellence in a few key areas.*
   - *Promote best practices in education.*

The following comment was made by a delegate during the Summit gallery walk.

- Educate Albertans to understand that we must pay for our choices and priorities.

DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY.

V Further the economic diversification of the province in order to reduce Alberta's dependence on nonrenewable natural resources.

1. Measure the extent of industry reliance on nonrenewable resources.

2. Identify and support industries which can help to diversify the economy and provide Alberta with a competitive advantage in areas such as biotechnology, oil and gas research, public–private partnerships, interprovincial trade and tourism.

3. Promote and expand small business loan programs.

4. Develop tax incentive programs to support new industries and value-added production.

5. Increase spending on education and research.

6. Establish a rainy day savings account (not an endowment fund).

7. Promote interprovincial trade and standardize interprovincial regulations.

8. Invest in human capital to ensure that Alberta can meet future demands for skilled labour.
   - *Ensure that skilled older Albertans can continue to contribute to the labour force.*
   - *Review the immigration policies that deal with skilled labour.*
   - *Tap into the labour pools of countries such as Mexico.*

9. Take advantage of the opportunities provided by an externally focused business community by establishing public–private sector partnerships.

The following comment was made by a delegate during the Summit gallery walk.

- Implement policies to recognize foreign credentials and qualifications. This will ensure that foreign-trained Albertans can use their skills to contribute to the economy.

IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS.

VI Develop outcome-based business and program plans that address Albertans' priorities and help sustain a high quality of life.

1. Establish standards, benchmarks and expected outcomes for sectors such as health care, education and transportation. Provide adequate long-term funds.

2. Conduct a gap analysis to establish what services are required versus what is available.

3. Set priorities based on broad-based consensus.

4. Develop results-based business plans in which program spending is tied to outcomes. Ensure that plans are flexible enough to accommodate change.

5. Measure performance based on international standards of best practice. Produce interim as well as long-range performance measurement reports.

INVOLVE STAKEHOLDERS IN DECISION MAKING.

VII Involve citizens, the private sector and not-for-profit organizations in government decision making and in the implementation of government plans and follow-up processes.

1. Seek public and private-sector input through forums, advisory groups and meetings.
   - *Increase public awareness of the possible avenues for input into government decision making. Standing Policy Committee is one example.*
   - *Communicate decisions and plans.*

2. Fund stakeholder participation in the consultation process.

3. Foster public–private partnerships to deliver products and services.

4. Broaden the range of stakeholders that participate in government consultations.

IMPROVE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY.

VIII Make government accountable and improve the transparency of government processes.

1. Remove the term "one-time spending" from Alberta's political vocabulary.

2. Introduce legislation to protect Alberta taxpayers.
   - *Proposed tax increases should be approved by referendum.*

3. Introduce spending-control legislation.
   - *Growth in government spending should be indexed to inflation and population growth.*
   - *Penalize cabinet ministers with salary cuts if they exceed approved ministry budgets.*

4. Legislate a review process for government programs.
   - *Regular reviews would establish whether programs should be continued, modified or cancelled.*

5. Publicize the terms of all government contracts. Identify the cost of providing goods and services.

6. Establish an open, transparent process to determine MLA compensation.
   - *Proposed changes should be voted on by MLAs and should come into effect after the next election.*

7. Use generally accepted accounting principles for government budgets and accounts.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Ensure that fiscal decisions are made for the benefit of all Albertans and not influenced by special interest groups.
- Develop zero-based budgets every three years rather than every year.

CLARIFY ROLES.

IX Clarify government roles and responsibilities.

1. Clearly define the role of each order of government.

2. Eliminate the duplication of government services.

3. Investigate the feasibility of reducing the size of government.

4. Reduce the number of municipalities in the province.
   - *Determine the optimum size and geographic region for each municipality in Alberta.*
   - *Reduce the total number of municipalities through consolidation.*

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- We need better government, not smaller government.
- The current paternalistic relationships between orders of government will need to change before effective partnerships can be established.
- Higher orders of government cannot continue to transfer responsibilities to municipalities, nonprofit organizations and individuals unless they also transfer funds or control of revenue-generating mechanisms.

IMPROVE EFFICIENCY.

X Improve the efficiency of Alberta's revenue-generating systems.

1. Explore new revenue-generating opportunities. These might include user fees, infrastructure charges or new taxes.

LEAD AND INNOVATE.

XI Foster innovation, leadership and openness to new ideas.

1. Develop, maintain and evaluate ongoing research and development activities.
   - *Establish endowments and reserve funds to ensure reliable research funding.*
   - *Provide tax incentives to encourage private sector investment in research.*
   - *Develop centres of excellence in research.*
   - *Encourage research and development activities that leverage funding and support from nongovernment sources.*

2. Encourage innovation and leadership in individuals and across all levels of government.
   - *Provide incentives (awards, bonuses and promotions) to reward and encourage innovative thinking within government departments.*
   - *Provide management training programs and encourage risk-taking.*

The following material was compiled from input provided by over 4,000 Albertans who took part in the initial Future Summit consultations (September–December 2001). In many cases, this material supports the strategies developed by Summit delegates. It also includes a number of alternative viewpoints and approaches which should be considered.

Fiscal responsibility comprises several interrelated factors:

- effective budget and business planning
- saving for the future
- prudent management of revenue volatility
- sustainable spending
- competitive taxation

Keeping Taxes Low and Competitive

Albertans saw tax reduction as more than a simple tax policy issue. They viewed the Alberta Government's low-tax policy as a result of the interplay between fiscal policies and priorities, public expectations and economic circumstances. They recognized that the ability of the government to reduce taxes is tied to a larger issue—namely, how the government can best fulfill its obligations to Albertans within the context of the larger framework of interprovincial and international economic competition.

There was no strong consensus on how the province can maintain low, competitive taxes in the future. Some Albertans said they liked low taxes; others felt that provincial taxes and spending are too low to maintain effective programs.

Most Albertans felt that the best way to keep taxes low was to maintain a **stable fiscal planning** process.

Albertans who supported low taxation proposed several policies and strategies for keeping taxes low and competitive in the future:

1. Some believed that Alberta should continue to **repay the debt** in order to reduce future taxes. They identified being debt free as a goal of a fiscally responsible government and a sign of good fiscal planning.

2. Some believed that maintaining a **transparent, accountable, efficient, effective and responsive government** would help Alberta reduce future taxes. Such a government would be better able to meet its program responsibilities and tax reduction goals within its fiscal constraints.

3. Many Albertans advocated **economic diversification** as a tax-reduction strategy. They recognized that the government's long-term control over tax levels depends on the health of the economy as a tax base. The tax base responds to economic and employment drivers. The more diversified and flexible the economy, the less the likelihood that the government will need to raise taxes to maintain revenues.

4. Some people suggested that Albertans could reduce their tax burden if they **reduced demand for services** from the government. They highlighted the role that individual Albertans play in reducing public spending pressures and reducing the pressure on government to raise taxes.

5. Albertans suggested that taxes could be lower in the future if investments were made in the **education** of today's Albertans. The overall message was not that the province needs more spending on education, but that it needs an appropriate level of spending—especially in relation to career and employment training. The general view was that educated Albertans could better look after themselves and their communities, thereby reducing reliance on and demand for provincial programs and services.

Saving and Investing for the Future

Albertans believed **education** programs were the most likely to bring future benefits.

Although program spending is not really a savings or investment choice, most Albertans recommended investing in education as an appropriate strategy for the future. They felt that a balance needs to be found between saving public money for the future and enhancing the quality of Alberta's education system for the future.

Albertans identified three other government-based strategies for future savings and investments:

- the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund
- debt, deficit and taxation controls within a strong fiscal review process capable of managing Alberta's large fluctuations in resource revenues
- economic diversification

A significant minority of Albertans felt that the government had little or no role to play in saving and investing: they believed that individual Albertans should rely on themselves to secure their future economic well-being. Some suggested that the government might have a role in providing incentives and education to support individuals in their savings and investment activities.

Fostering Self-Reliance

Albertans expressed a fundamental belief that individuals should take first and foremost responsibility for themselves and their welfare.

While recognizing the need for effective government, Albertans felt that government should play only a secondary or supporting role—both in individuals' pursuits of a high quality of life and the economy's pursuit of productivity growth and diversity.

While most Albertans believed that individuals need to take primary responsibility for preparing for the future, there was a range of opinions as to the extent of this responsibility:

- Some Albertans believed that individuals should be completely responsible for themselves—especially for their retirement. Others suggested that a forced savings plan should be implemented to ensure that individuals save for the future.
- Some Albertans advocated self-reliance, but indicated that some form of public support needs to be available to help people through short-term hardships.
- Some suggested that the government should be totally responsible for retirement and hardship, but only for a short time, so that individuals in need could get back on their feet.
- Some proposed that individual responsibility should be based on income levels and that assistance should be made available to low-income individuals and families.
- Some believed that responsibility for retirement and hardship should be equally shared—by individuals and government, or by individuals, their employers and government.

Many Albertans placed a high priority on a public safety net even while stressing the need for individual responsibility.

Albertans expressed a need for information and for opportunities to educate themselves about financial management and the consequences of not planning for the future. Some proposed that financial education should be included as part of the school curriculum.

Many Albertans suggested that a fair tax system is needed to ensure more dollars are available for investing and saving. A number of other strategies were also proposed, including:

- increasing RRSP contribution limits
- providing more savings options as well as incentives to save
- implementing a higher minimum wage rate
- instituting an Alberta pension plan
- ensuring that pensions are portable
- lowering tax rates

Government Spending

Fiscal responsibility does not mean spending reductions, but rather, effective spending within our means.

Albertans identified four priorities for government spending:

- education
- health care
- public infrastructure and transportation systems
- social services

Other areas of concern included:

- the environment
- culture
- safety and security

Education

Albertans said education was critically important in preparing Alberta for the future.

Albertans saw education as an investment with long-term social and economic benefits. They noted that Albertans in all parts of the province need access—in the classroom and beyond—to a variety of lifelong learning opportunities, including:

- literacy and basic skills training
- secondary and postsecondary education
- apprenticeships and workforce preparation
- liberal arts and leadership training

Some Albertans suggested that, because business and industry profit from an educated workforce, they should fund some portion of education costs. Some proposed that individuals, industry and government should share the cost of education. Some stressed that education at all levels should be well funded. This group viewed education as an investment, not a yearly expenditure, and felt that the current levels of government funding were not adequate.

Many Albertans felt that enhanced funding for education should not be derived from private sources. They emphasized the importance of public education and the need for education funding to remain in the public domain. Other Albertans felt it was desirable to have choices other than just public education.

Some Albertans identified a need to redevelop and refine the traditional curriculum. They were satisfied with the learning basics—the three Rs—but felt that the education system should also incorporate alternative curricula, an employment focus and/or life skills training.

Health Care

Albertans recognized the importance of **preventative medicine** and **health and wellness**. Albertans believed that the government should advocate a significant portion of core fiscal resources to health and health care, including:

- health promotion and advocacy
- preventative health care
  - *While preventative health care was not explicitly identified as a cost-saving measure, this was implied and is worthy of note.*
- promotion of a healthy lifestyle that includes exercise, proper diet, recreation and active living
- development of strategies to deal with mental health issues
- chronic disease management

Some Albertans were opposed to private or for-profit health care. Some made a point of specifically stating their objection to private health care providers or user fees, often declaring "public health care" or "accessible to all, not just those who can afford it" in their workbook responses. A handful of Albertans expressed interest in private medicine, although not without some reservations. A few, for instance, noted that while private health care providers could alleviate some of the current burdens within the traditional system, certain conditions (these were not identified) must apply.

Infrastructure

Public services are important for Alberta's future.

Albertans felt that core spending on infrastructure should include:

- roads and road maintenance
- communications and communication networks such as the Internet
- public transportation
- hospitals, schools and libraries
- basic needs such as food, water and housing

They saw infrastructure spending as a long-term investment with value-added benefits. They noted that physical infrastructure such as roads, public transportation and communication networks helps meet the needs of Alberta's people. It also supports Alberta's industries and facilitates the efficient distribution of goods and services provincially, nationally and internationally.

Social Services and Well-Being

Strong **social safety and social services networks** ensure that all Albertans share in the economic and social advantages of a debt-free province.

Most Albertans felt that strong social safety and social services networks were needed to protect the disadvantaged and vulnerable members of Alberta's society.

Some Albertans suggested that investing in a strong social services system would benefit Alberta should economic conditions change. While Alberta currently enjoys an enviable economic position, a downturn in the economy could increase the numbers of people who need social assistance. A strong social services infrastructure would ensure that all Albertans received the assistance they required.

Of those who identified social services as a core area for government spending, most highlighted children and youth as being of primary concern. They saw a clear relationship between investment in children and the future well-being of the province. Some Albertans observed that, while investment in social services is valuable and necessary, current priorities must be redefined in response to perceived inequities, costs or inefficiencies.

Communities

Background

With over three million people, Alberta is Canada's fourth largest province. The people of the province celebrate their multicultural heritage and the rich diversity of Alberta's citizens. They share in a strong identity as Albertans.

Quality of life is important to Albertans—as individuals, family members and citizens of their communities. A vibrant arts scene, culture and recreation opportunities, spiritual and physical well-being, volunteerism, family and family values, a social safety net, public security, access to education and a clean environment all affect Albertans' quality of life.

The 21st century brings many challenges for Alberta's communities.

1. migration, population growth and urbanization
   - *Alberta's strong population growth will continue to exert pressures on the province's infrastructure and that of its communities.*

2. demographics
   - *By 2026, the proportion of Albertans aged 65 or over is expected to grow to 21.4% of the population. The proportion of people between 15 and 64 years of age is predicted to decline to 63.7%.*
   - *Alberta's changing demographics will pose challenges to government service delivery in areas such as health care and accentuate current shortages of skilled workers in the labour market. Perhaps more importantly, demographic changes will pose challenges to the way Albertans as a society value and treat seniors.*

3. safety, security and health
   - *Physical security has become more important since the events of September 11, which highlighted the difficulty of protecting the infrastructure spread across our vast province.*

4. diversity
   - *Challenges include ensuring that new immigrants have educational and job opportunities that facilitate their full integration into society.*

5. Aboriginal communities
   - *Income disparities and the remote locations of many Aboriginal communities pose challenges with regard to access to services, education, employment and improvement of infrastructure. On the other hand, issues of inclusion and an appreciation for Aboriginal culture pose opportunities for increased cooperation between Aboriginal groups and the various orders of government.*

Albertans' Vision

The following vision for Alberta's communities is a composite of Summit delegates' views and the views of the 4,000 Albertans who voiced their opinions during the initial Summit consultations (September–December 2001).

When Albertans think about the future, they would like to see safe, caring communities in which citizens are empowered and make a positive contribution. Communities are founded on well-planned infrastructure which provides programs and services that meet people's needs.

In the Alberta of the future

Albertans live in a sharing, compassionate society that encourages personal initiative, empowers its citizens and provides opportunities for people to achieve their full potential.

Diversity is accepted and valued. Seniors, young people, immigrants and the disabled are fully participating members of society. Racial, social and economic discrimination does not exist. There is a social safety net in place for those in need and poverty has been eliminated.

Albertans live in a variety of communities—both rural and urban—which meet the needs of their citizens in the areas of housing, safety, health and wellness, social services, culture and recreation. Urban growth is balanced by rural vitality and community services enjoy government support. There is regional and inter-regional cooperation.

Alberta's communities are safe and inclusive. They are places where citizens of all ages celebrate their history, their Canadian identity, their culture and their diversity—and work together, in partnership with governments and other agencies, to support and nurture one another. Aboriginal people participate alongside other Albertans and share the benefits of Alberta's prosperity.

Albertans are healthy, well educated and socially conscious. They have the resources they need to pursue careers, provide for their families and enjoy a secure life. They have access to recreation and sporting programs and to a strong, diverse arts and cultural environment. And they have time to do what they enjoy.

Albertans believe in volunteerism and self-reliance. They take responsibility for themselves and their communities. They get involved—and contribute to the well-being of society as a whole. They live meaningful, productive lives and enjoy the freedom and opportunities their communities provide.

Alberta's communities are attractive places to live and to work. Albertans preserve their cultural and architectural heritage. They enjoy green space, natural areas and parks, clean water and clean air. They also enjoy a wide array of recreational, cultural and educational opportunities.

Alberta's communities are supported by a well-maintained, partnership-based infrastructure that is more than just bricks and mortar. Technology facilitates efficient transportation systems as well as access to information and knowledge. Communications technology is available to everyone. Albertans have access to lifelong learning opportunities, distance education, and affordable programs and services that support healthy lifestyles and contribute to the enjoyment of a good life.

Alberta's communities form a small but integral part of the global community. Albertans are citizens of the world.

Future Summit delegates identified a number of obstacles that Albertans will need to overcome in order to realize this vision of the future. They developed a corresponding list of opportunities.

Obstacles

- There is a lack of cooperation between orders of government.
- There is a lack of clear definition of what constitutes essential needs and a lack of consensus about priorities.
- There is a lack of authority for local government; the *Municipal Government Act* limits actions.
- Funding constraints include a lack of adequate funding, competition for funding, fluctuations in the availability of funding, and the need to spend budget surpluses at the end of a given time frame. The legislated no-deficit policy (the *Fiscal Responsibility Act*) limits the availability of funding.
- There is a lack of long-range planning.
- The tax structure does not meet the needs and demands of citizens.
- There is discrimination and a lack of understanding about different segments of society.
- There is a lack of acknowledgement of social problems and lack of a systemic political commitment to address them.
- There is apathy for community issues and a lack of personal ownership.
- There is competition among vested interests.
- Urban and rural inequities exist in areas such as distance learning and access to education.
- Some communities are not diversified and depend on a single industry.
- There is a lack of incentives for collaboration.

Opportunities

- Albertans have the ability to influence outcomes by participating in the democratic process.
- Alberta's government is financially responsible. The *Fiscal Responsibility Act* encourages partnerships that help use resources as effectively as possible.
- Alberta has wealth and resources to support communities.
- There are opportunities to provide leadership training for Alberta's youth.
- There are opportunities to make better use of Alberta's human resource capabilities. The voluntary sector is strong. Alberta's aging population is a valuable resource. Immigration rates can be increased.
- Alberta's culture of entrepreneurship encourages new technology.

Guiding Principles

Community is the integrating force for people, place, environment, infrastructure, funding and governance in Alberta.

All Albertans will have access to the basic essentials of life.

Alberta's communities provide individuals with the opportunities and support they need to reach their full potential and to make a contribution in return.

The economic viability of communities is dependent on the quality of life.

Communities are guided by a commitment to cooperation. The needs and contributions of every individual and group are respected. Compassion and fellowship are valued.

Individual and community interests are appropriately balanced. Individuals take personal responsibility for their actions.

Alberta is a just society where individuals and groups enjoy democratic freedoms. Human rights are upheld.

Building strong, resilient communities requires fiscal vision and leadership.

Strategies and Ideas for Action

The following is a summary of delegates' deliberations at the Alberta Future Summit 2002 in Red Deer, February 4–5, 2002. In most cases, the strategies had the support of all the delegates in the Communities group. There was less consensus about some of the specific ideas for action.

FACILITATE COMMUNITY PLANNING.

I Empower communities to develop sustainable, strategic, long-term community development and budget plans. Ensure accountability for these plans.

1. Identify community needs and develop strategies and action plans to address issues. Clearly define and communicate terms of reference.
   - *Conduct focus groups and encourage other citizen engagement mechanisms to develop and prioritize community planning issues.*
   - *Assess and evaluate community plans to ensure their flexibility and continued relevance.*
   - *Secure the involvement and commitment of key municipal employees.*

2. Establish regional planning authorities which are empowered to make decisions regarding land use.

3. Research global solutions to encourage citizen involvement.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Acknowledge and encourage the contribution of the arts to the Alberta Advantage and provide funding support.
- How will local authorities get the funding to do what is being asked?
- Review the *Municipal Government Act* to identify obstacles to planning.
- Negotiate strength for cities vis-a-vis the federal and provincial governments.

ENSURE STABLE FUNDING.

II Ensure the availability of stable, long-range funding to support Alberta's communities.

1. Invest in the development and maintenance of safe, reliable core infrastructure such as water, sewers and roads.

2. Revise government policy to provide for stable, long-term revenues to fund cultural, social and recreational infrastructure. Several options were proposed.
   - *Repeal the* Fiscal Responsibility Act *to allow for deficit budgeting and spending, if required.*
   - *Establish a "Heritage-style" fund to stabilize ongoing operational funding for the nonprofit sector.*
   - *Eliminate the flat tax and go back to a progressive taxation system.*

3. Work with communities to facilitate the sustainability of the nonprofit sector.

4. Reduce the provincial share of local property taxes. Use the General Revenue Fund to increase provincial funding of education.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Communities need to consider the ongoing requirements of new infrastructure. It is not "one-time spending."
- Remove barriers for business start-ups in rural or small-town Alberta. This will provide an incentive for young people to stay in farming.
- Renew support for sport and recreational infrastructure, staff and programming.
- Continue financial support to public libraries and The Alberta Library.
- Reward volunteers.
- Eliminate the "NIMBY" (not in my back yard) attitude.

PROVIDE A RELIABLE SOCIAL SAFETY NETWORK.

III Help disadvantaged and vulnerable Albertans maximize their potential.

1. Create an economy with full employment based on a living wage. Begin by raising the minimum wage.

2. Raise the benefit rates for low-income support programs. (Benefit levels have not changed since 1993.)

3. Ensure that Albertans who are unable to work receive a living income to support themselves and their families. Ensure that these individuals also receive the support they need.

4. Ensure that Alberta's children have "first call" on resources in all areas of provincial jurisdiction.

5. Work to address the factors that contribute to poverty.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Disadvantaged individuals need more than money to meet their basic needs.
- The presumption is that basic needs are not being met now.
- What do we, as Albertans, consider to be basic needs? What people endure at present, some of us would consider less than basic.

CREATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

IV Create partnerships of citizens, business and government to ensure that all Albertans have homes that meet their personal and family needs.

1. Address the root causes of homelessness. Involve appropriate government departments in addressing homelessness issues.

2. Commit provincial funding for affordable housing programs.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Provide more support for programs like Habitat for Humanity.
- Provide more rent supplements and funding for the homeless.
- Offer tax breaks and incentives for developers to build low-cost housing units.
- Teach people how to become homeowners.
- People should be responsible for providing for their own housing. It's not the government's job.
- The solution to homelessness is more affordable housing. Alberta should share affordable housing development costs with the federal government.

SUPPORT LOCAL INITIATIVES.

V Support local initiatives that enhance quality of life.

1. Provide adequate funding for local initiatives that enhance quality of life.
   - *Increase infrastructure facility grants.*
   - *Increase provincial funding for the arts, libraries, sports and recreation, heritage and culture.*
   - *Reinstate the urban and rural parks program. Build more community parks.*

2. Expand programs that offer high school credits for volunteerism.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- More money for community initiatives means higher taxes. Higher taxes mean people will have less money to fund local initiatives.
- Where is the individual's responsibility for quality of life?
- There is a need to help special needs children through schools and hospitals in small urban centres.
- Support volunteer groups, don't hinder them.

DEVELOP ALBERTA'S HUMAN RESOURCES.

VI Support human resource development through training, retention of skilled workers and immigration.

1. Ensure that Albertans have access to relevant training programs and job placement opportunities.

2. Educate communities about Alberta's changing demographics and the need for increased immigration to ensure that our labour force is large enough to meet future needs.

3. Increase immigration targets (in specific age brackets).

4. Provide more support for new immigrants.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Find ways to keep our citizens and our special talents in Alberta.
- Deal with the shortage of doctors by committing provincial resources to provide hospital internships for foreign-trained physicians.
- Heritage resources (especially museums) can contribute to building citizenship and civil society. Educate new Albertans about our province's past. Support them by sharing their stories.

SUPPORT EDUCATION.

VII Encourage governments, industry and communities to work as partners in promoting and providing affordable, equitable education to all Albertans.

1. Promote and support public education.

2. Establish an equitable learning system that is learner centred and accessible when and where the learner needs it.
   - *Ensure that affordable, relevant lifelong learning and development opportunities are accessible in local communities.*
   - *Ensure that postsecondary education is affordable.*

3. Develop training and learning opportunities that are transferable (recognized by other institutions).

4. Provide leadership training opportunities for all Albertans.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Incorporate best practices from other communities, provinces or countries.
- Public libraries have a role in lifelong learning.
- Bring back the community school concept.

RECOGNIZE COMMUNITY NEEDS.

VIII Recognize the needs of both urban and rural communities.

1. Stimulate economic diversification and development initiatives in all areas of Alberta.

2. Ensure that all Albertans have access to high-speed communication technology.

3. Support multi-community sharing of services to take advantage of economies of scale.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Encourage intermunicipal (urban–to–urban and urban–to–rural) and inter-regional agreements and cooperation.
- Cities have twins in other provinces and countries. Why not adopt a rural community?
- Acknowledge the value of agriculture as an important industry in Alberta and stop referring to it as a "way of life." This change in attitude will go a long way to garner urban support.

MAINTAIN SAFETY AND SECURITY.

IX Ensure that Albertans are safe and secure in their homes, workplaces and communities.

1. Develop a provincial plan for safety and security. Components of the plan might include:
   - *integration of local, regional and provincial emergency services.*
   - *management of risk from natural and human threats.*

PROMOTE ECONOMIC DIVERSITY.

X Promote economic diversification in Alberta's communities.

1. Promote entrepreneurship as a viable career option.

2. Encourage local industries to become business mentors and coaches for start-ups.

3. Use technology to expand market opportunities.

4. Develop venture capital pools to finance start-up companies.

5. Provide incentives for businesses to expand and diversify into the local community.

6. Market the Alberta Advantage to companies that are planning to locate in Alberta. Ensure that companies have information about all prospective sites—both rural and urban.
   - *The Alberta Advantage is sufficiently strong to permit the direction of industry to urban areas outside of the Calgary–Edmonton corridor.*

7. Encourage entrepreneurial growth by providing loans for small businesses.
   - *The loan fund should be established and maintained by existing businesses and industries with a vested interest.*

ENCOURAGE PARTNERSHIPS.

XI Encourage partnerships to maximize the utilization of resources in Alberta's communities.

1. Design community centres as multi-use facilities.
   - *Cooperatively managed community centres which support multiple programs and functions reduce the burden on governments and community members. Everyone benefits.*

2. Maximize the use of public facilities. Make schools available for community use.

3. Streamline community services to improve efficiency, minimize fragmentation and eliminate administration-related duplication.

4. Revise legislation to encourage innovative thinking and interdisciplinary partnerships (between seniors, housing and health agencies, for example).

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Enlist the assistance of new graduates to develop effective partnerships between industry, government and communities.
- Enhance citizenship training in the public school curriculum.
- Integrate the arts with education and with economic and community development.
- Use public libraries to the fullest. Libraries provide free Internet access and support lifelong learning.

The following material was compiled from input provided by over 4,000 Albertans who took part in the initial Future Summit consultations (September–December 2001). In many cases, this material supports the strategies developed by Summit delegates. It also includes a number of alternative viewpoints and approaches which should be considered.

Albertans identified four key issues important for their communities:

- safety and security
- planning, development and infrastructure
- viability
- community spirit

The accessibility and availability of programs and services were overarching themes.

Safety and Security

Albertans were concerned about safety in their communities. Their suggestions for addressing this issue included:

- implementing community-based policing
- increasing police funding in rural and urban Alberta
- placing a greater emphasis on crime prevention through educational programs and partnerships between schools and the police
- addressing child poverty and the root causes of crime
- implementing arts and sports programs for youth
- implementing stricter law enforcement policies and more severe penalties for crime
- investigating new options such as community-based justice systems

Planning, Development and Infrastructure

Many Albertans—both in the urban and rural areas of the province—associated quality of life with self-contained neighbourhoods in which people live, work and play and in which community facilities are within walking distance or easily accessible through public transportation. Many were concerned about controlling urban sprawl and industrial expansion near residential areas.

Albertans believed that green space, trees and parks, and walking trails should be part of their communities. They felt that community facilities should support active living and provide affordable sports and recreation opportunities for citizens of all ages. Many Albertans supported more funding for the arts and believed that the arts and cultural activities should be more affordable and accessible. Some said that access to information, affordable health care and affordable housing were important aspects of viable communities.

Viability

Some Albertans, particularly rural Albertans, expressed concern about the long-term viability of their communities and the challenges of attracting and retaining residents. Responses typically centred around access to government services or increased funding for amenities in the areas of sports, recreation, arts and culture. Suggestions included:

- establishing multi-purpose recreation centres
- designing communities to encourage active living
- encouraging and supporting the film industry
- holding more community festivals

Community Spirit

Many Albertans spoke about their communities in terms of the relationships between people and the values that help create community spirit.

Albertans saw their communities as places where everyone "belongs" and has the opportunity to participate. They described their ideal communities as places where:

- Cultural diversity is celebrated.
- Newcomers of all races and religions are accepted.
- Individuals are respected.
- Men and women are equal.
- There is no discrimination and inequalities, if any, are being addressed.
- Volunteers are valued and volunteerism is widespread.
- Programs and services are well-funded, community-based partnerships.

Best Practices for Community Enhancement

Albertans proposed researching best practices around the world and implementing them at home. Their ideas about best practices spanned a broad range of topics, from the general to the specific. Here are some examples:

- Revitalize city-core areas and depopulated rural areas.
- Provide affordable housing programs.
- Use technology to connect Albertans in their immediate communities and beyond community borders.
- Celebrate Alberta's achievements and foster community pride.
- Support local businesses.
- Design infrastructure to serve multiple purposes. (For example, use schools as community facilities.)
- Empower citizens to be part of community decision making.
- Appreciate what we have.
- Share and learn from others.
- Value partnerships.
- Set goals and work toward them.

Health and Wellness

Background

Alberta has a publicly funded health system that guarantees universal access to medically necessary hospital and medical services for Albertans. Public health services and programs are delivered through the province's 17 regional health authorities (RHAs), the Alberta Cancer Board and the Alberta Mental Health Board.

Environmental health programs, health surveillance, health protection, and noncommunicable disease and injury prevention programs are essential for maintaining and improving the health of any population. Alberta maintains a number of health promotion programs which support healthy environments, healthy living and preventative measures—not just after-the-fact treatment of illness or injury.

Sustaining quality health care for Albertans is of paramount importance for maintaining a high quality of life. However, many factors combine to put upward pressure on the total cost of providing health care. These include:

- an aging population
- higher societal expectations, both for the quality of health care and access to care
- rising labour costs
- constant technological change
- better, more expensive treatments and therapies
- newer, more expensive drugs

Health spending projected for 2001–2002 represented 34% of total government program spending and was Alberta's single largest expenditure. To keep pace with the rising cost of health care, a range of controversial but potentially useful ideas may need to be considered. These might include user charges, medical savings accounts and delisting some medical services.

The responsibility for health is shared by the government, communities and individuals. Measures aimed at health promotion and at building healthy communities offer the potential to improve both the health of Alberta's citizens and their quality of life.

Albertans' Vision

The following vision for health and wellness is a composite of Summit delegates' views and the views of the 4,000 Albertans who voiced their opinions during the initial Summit consultations (September–December 2001).

When Albertans think about the future, they would like to see a first-class health and wellness system that promotes and supports healthy living and provides all Albertans with access to affordable, quality services when they need them.

In the Alberta of the future

Albertans lead active, healthy lives. They take responsibility for their wellness and make responsible choices. Their proactive approach helps prevent illness.

When preventative measures are not enough, Albertans have access to the health and wellness services they need. The health and wellness system is affordable, effective, sustainable, cost effective, outcome driven and accessible to all. Client-focused and community-based, it provides timely, high-quality services supportive of citizens' needs.

Alberta's health and wellness system is among the best in the world. It is supported by ongoing research and by knowledgeable, educated citizens who, in partnership with government and with the health professions, actively promote their own health and wellness.

Alberta has quality health and wellness services and programs supported by government funding.

Future Summit delegates identified a number of obstacles that Albertans will need to overcome in order to realize this vision of the future. They developed a corresponding list of opportunities.

Obstacles

- Alberta has a long history of health care delivery based on an illness model, not a wellness model. The medical curriculum underemphasizes wellness.
- It is difficult to manage public expectations and attitudes regarding the use of services and to deal with abuses of the system.
- The territorial attitudes held by healthcare professionals and the gatekeeper role of physicians are obstacles.
- Increased demands, decreases in federal funding, demographic change and the rising costs of services exert pressure on health and wellness budgets.
- There is a shortage of health service providers. More people are working part time or leaving the health professions. It is difficult to retain trained employees.
- There is an unwillingness to explore alternative service delivery approaches. There is a fear of change.
- Workers in the system suffer from low morale.
- There is a lack of clarity regarding "what services are essential." There is a lack of clarity about what services should be publicly funded.
- Alberta has a lack of facilities (including research facilities).
- There is a lack of knowledge about new diseases.
- There is a need to restructure the drug industry. This will have a cost.
- The current *Food and Drugs Act* and the length of time it takes to approve new drugs is an obstacle.
- A large income gap exists in Alberta.
- There is a lack of political will to make changes.
- Alberta must deal with external pressures from drug companies and alcohol and tobacco lobby groups.
- Recreation and nutrition are undervalued.
- Voluntary sector contributions to health and wellness are undervalued.
- The current practice of fee-for-service payments to doctors is an obstacle.

Opportunities

- Alberta can explore new models for funding and delivery of primary care.
- The skills of nurses and other health professionals can be used more effectively.
- Alternative medical treatments are available.
- Alberta offers many advantages. This can be used to attract health professionals from other places.
- The Internet provides individuals with a source of information on health and wellness issues.
- There are many opportunities for research. Research results contribute to evidence-based decision making.
- There is a growing focus on wellness and awareness programs.
- Alberta can look at the strengths and weaknesses of health systems in other provinces or countries.
- Health professionals have access to demographic information which can help in decision making regarding Aboriginals and other groups.

Guiding Principles

Future Summit delegates felt that Alberta's decisions for health and wellness should be based on the principles of:

- accessibility
- cooperation
- leadership
- adaptability
- accountability
- sustainability
- balance
- equity and fairness
- universality
- affordability
- public funding
- comprehensiveness
- portability
- ethics and compassion

Strategies and Ideas for Action

The following is a summary of delegates' deliberations at the Alberta Future Summit 2002 in Red Deer, February 4–5, 2002. In most cases, the strategies had the support of all the delegates in the Health and Wellness group. There was less consensus about some of the specific ideas for action.

USE A TEAM-BASED APPROACH TO HEALTH CARE DELIVERY.

I Establish a healthy-living model that makes effective use of health and wellness teams. Address medical staff shortages in innovative ways.

1. Put physicians on salary, on a voluntary basis.
2. Review and accelerate the certification process for foreign-trained medical professionals.
3. Incorporate nurse practitioners into the delivery of primary health care services.
4. Provide incentives for physicians to locate in rural areas.
5. Restructure the mental health system.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Restructure the mental health system so that it is community based rather than facility based.
- Establish multi-function, community-based clinics which provide patients with a full range of services in one facility.
- Integrate related health and social services at the community level.
- Station public health nurses in community churches or schools in areas where seniors live.
- Use primary health and team approaches for rural communities.
- Ensure that health professionals incorporate an understanding of cultural diversity into their patient treatment practices.
- Integrate health and wellness, education, justice and social services programming. Encourage partnerships rather than silos.
- The challenge is to shift the perception that MDs are the only experts qualified to build this future.

REVIEW THE PROVINCE'S HEALTH AND WELLNESS LEGISLATION.

II Review Alberta's health- and wellness-related legislation to ensure that essential services are defined, principles are identified and the health care needs of all Albertans are adequately met.

1. Define the principles which will guide health and wellness decision making.
2. Define essential services.
3. Update legislation to broaden the approved scope of practice for health professionals.
4. Establish a task force to investigate Aboriginal health issues.
5. Introduce legislation to deal with tobacco-related illness.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Define roles and responsibilities. Establish "who provides what." What order of government is responsible? What is the role of the public sector? The private sector?
- Consider reducing the number of regional health authorities.
- Appoint liaison staff to serve as intermediaries between the health care system and Albertans who may be unaccustomed to or intimidated by the system. (Aboriginals and immigrants are an example.)
- Formally acknowledge the Mazankowski report.
- Legislate a provincial law banning smoking in public places.
- Rewrite the *Medical Act of Alberta* (College of Physicians and Surgeons).

SUPPORT HEALTHY LIVING.

III Create, support and maintain healthy lifestyle choices for all Albertans.

Delegates proposed that Alberta launch the following initiatives immediately and that they should be ongoing.

1. Market and promote the benefits of recreation and wellness.

2. Reintroduce daily physical or recreational activities into the school curriculum.

3. Update, implement and promote active living strategies.

4. Maintain and upgrade aging recreational infrastructure. Support new recreational infrastructure in growing communities.

5. Invest in an Alberta sport plan.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

ACTIVE LIVING

- Encourage active living through recreation.
- Every rural area should have access to a fitness facility.
- Develop a new "ParticipACTION" program model. Promote outdoor activity as a way of improving health.
- Companies could pay a portion of fitness facility membership fees for their employees.
- Provide financial support for sport and fitness activities.

EDUCATION

- Nutritional education in schools is inadequate.
- For Albertans to be responsible for their own wellness, they need to know what is necessary for them to stay well.
- Ensure that young people have access to informed, accurate sexual health education.
- Make physical education mandatory in Alberta schools.
- Provide education on healthy lifestyles.

LIFESTYLE CHOICES

- Increase cigarette prices to discourage smoking.
- Wellness and prevention can reduce health costs. People should pay for "self-inflicted" health problems arising as a result of smoking, obesity or accidents through drunk driving.
- There are health implications for almost all lifestyle choices—smoking, alcohol, drugs, sports injuries, etc. We should be careful starting down this road of targeting people!
- Put more emphasis on early intervention strategies and programs.

CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES.

IV Create a supportive environment and develop criteria for approving alternative approaches to health.

1. Introduce legislation to approve research-supported alternative therapies and health care approaches.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- The public health care system should provide coverage for drugs and dental care as well as for validated or results-based alternative therapies.
- Promote naturally grown food products.
- Provide tax credits for individuals who use alternative health care.
- Provide opportunities for individuals to practice traditional medicine within health care settings. Respect traditional approaches.
- Broaden the acceptance of culturally sensitive medical practices.

IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY.

V Use continuous, outcome-based evaluation to increase productivity.

1. Use health professionals to their full scope of practice.

2. Re-evaluate standards and performance measures for treatment procedures, staffing and pharmatherapy. Shift the focus from inputs to outcomes.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Choose the most effective treatments for each condition and disease.
- Commit to continuous quality improvement. Conduct research on how outcomes can be improved.
- Develop strategies to reduce the consumption of services.

USE INCENTIVES.

VI Use incentives to promote health and wellness.

1. Develop reward and recognition programs. Provide incentives to encourage individuals to stay healthy and to encourage health service providers and companies to promote wellness.

2. Develop and monitor health spending accounts.

3. Award credits to individuals who make healthy lifestyle choices. Use these credits as cash equivalents to pay for services.

4. Impose penalties on individuals who suffer self-inflicted, preventable injuries—such as accidents caused by drunk driving.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- How will you avoid a two-tiered system?
- Look at the overuse of walk-in clinics.
- Ensure that "incentives" don't become "punishment" for those who can't participate.

REDUCE POVERTY.

VII Reduce poverty to reduce barriers to good health.

1. Develop early intervention programs to ensure that children living in poverty receive adequate nutrition.

2. Provide life skills training to help the poor access job opportunities.

3. Identify the barriers faced by the poor in accessing health services and recommend best practices for poverty interventions.

4. Increase funding levels and accessibility to programs such as Supports for Independence (SFI) and Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH).

5. Work with municipalities and with the federal government to provide affordable housing.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- The new vision incorporating preventative care should address a full range of determinants, including housing issues, minimum wage, the growing gap between rich and poor, and other issues.
- School boards, government authorities, children's and family agencies and corporations should be partners in health initiatives to help the poor.
- Create a health plan for children of the working poor. People on welfare have everything paid for, while children with parents who work but don't make a lot of money cannot afford glasses or prescriptions.
- Reduce poverty and increase education. These are the two most important determinants of health and wellness.

DEVELOP RESPONSIBLE BUDGETS.

VIII Develop, manage and continue to evaluate long-range, sustainable, fiscally responsible budgets for the new health and wellness system.

1. Consult with Albertans to determine what kind of health care they want and how they want to pay for it. Implement the suggestions of the public consultation.

2. Set up a revenue fund to support sustainability and ensure that core services are adequately funded.

3. Use research in all aspects of decision making.

4. Investigate alternative and complementary revenue options.
   - *Revenue sources include the government, individuals, tax deductible donations, lottery funds and taxes on unhealthy substances.*

5. Use a means test to decide who pays for services and how much.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- We must get past our obsession with the bottom line. Health care should be evaluated on whether it provides quality care to those who need it.
- The public needs to understand how dollars are spent.
- Do not increase user fees or premiums. We should pay for rapidly rising costs through direct, dedicated taxes such as a provincial sales tax.
- Educate doctors so that unnecessary testing is not performed and unnecessary return visits are not encouraged.
- Develop long-range home care plans that allow people to stay in familiar, comfortable settings, and provide adequate support.

FOCUS ON WELLNESS EDUCATION.

IX Educate individuals, health care professionals and other stakeholders about wellness.

1. Provide wellness education through public forums, school curricula and professional development programs.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Consider mandatory health and wellness education from Kindergarten through Grade 12.
- Funding for health and wellness education should come from the Learning ministry's budget, not from the Health budget.
- Provide job shadow opportunities with health workers.
- Involve communities as partners in identifying and developing health and wellness education plans.

DEVELOP A DATABASE.

X Develop and implement a confidential, comprehensive, secure health database to improve the efficiency of the health system. The database must ensure the security and confidentiality of patients' medical information. Assure patient/client control of information sharing with health care providers.

No ideas for action were developed for this strategy.

The following material was compiled from input provided by over 4,000 Albertans who took part in the initial Future Summit consultations (September–December 2001). In many cases, this material supports the strategies developed by Summit delegates. It also includes a number of alternative viewpoints and approaches which should be considered.

Albertans said they valued good health and appreciated Alberta's health care system. They saw a need to educate citizens of all ages about how they can lead healthier lives.

Active Living

Albertans recognized the relationship between active living and preventing illness and disease. They felt that exercise, recreation, physical activity and sport were important for maintaining overall wellness and health.

While many Albertans advocated taking personal responsibility for active, healthy lifestyles, they also felt that governments and communities have a role in providing recreation facilities, infrastructure and programs. Some suggested that tax incentives should be provided to Albertans who lead active lives.

Some Albertans proposed that fitness programs and facilities should be available in workplace environments. Many said that children should be encouraged to be more physically active. They supported the introduction of mandatory physical education and recreation programs from Grade 1 through Grade 12.

Environment

Albertans recognized that a healthy environment is key to a healthy population. They suggested that individuals, communities and governments need to work together to control pollution and reduce waste. Many said that governments should take a more proactive role in addressing public health issues such as clean air and clean water. Some proposed that government and industry work together to develop environmentally sound practices that could be showcased to the rest of the world.

Health Care Delivery

Albertans recognized that the government has an important role in health care. They identified four areas of government responsibility:

- health care service delivery
- funding for health-related research and technology
- health promotion and prevention programs
- ensuring accessible, high-quality, publicly funded health care for Albertans

While Albertans value our province's health care system, many were concerned about gaps and inefficiencies and looked to the government to provide solutions. Access to health care and to health service providers was a major concern.

Albertans recommended that serious consideration be given to how health care is delivered in Alberta. They suggested a number of options, including:

- looking at alternative methods of paying doctors
- increasing accountability for how health dollars are spent
- exploring alternative methods of service delivery
- reviewing how health clinics are set up and integrating the delivery of services
- ensuring that health-related tasks and services are delivered as economically as possible (For example, what is the best role for nurses? For doctors? Can nurses perform different tasks?)
- improving access to health services
- providing more home care and respite care to meet the needs of Alberta's aging population
- addressing the current shortage of health care providers
- providing recruitment incentives to attract health care professionals to Alberta
- exploring alternative approaches to health care

Many Albertans recognized the need for health research. They felt that unless research was linked to the decision-making process, the province would not develop a sustainable health care system. They also believed that research helps ensure that the health care system uses the best techniques for the best results.

Many Albertans recommended that the government implement primary health care reform.

While a small number of Albertans supported private health care, most emphasized the importance of keeping health care public.

Incentives

Many Albertans believed that individuals need to take responsibility for their own health. Some suggested that taxes or user fees should be imposed on individuals who deliberately choose unhealthy lifestyles, indulge in risky behaviours like smoking, and misuse the health system. They proposed that people who accept personal responsibility for healthy lifestyles and participate in recreation and sports should receive tax credits or other incentives.

Many Albertans suggested that tobacco taxes should be increased to discourage people from smoking. Tobacco tax revenues could be used to fund health care.

Some Albertans suggested that fitness and recreation programs should be subsidized to make them more affordable and encourage participation.

Prevention

Albertans recognized that preventing health problems is significantly less costly than curing sick people. They offered a number of suggestions for prevention-related initiatives:

- Make more prevention programs available, including programs that can help people stop smoking.
- Teach people how to make healthy lifestyle choices.
- Increase awareness about the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol.
- Incorporate health and wellness education into school curricula.
- Use technology to communicate health messages and health information.

The Environment

Background

The health of the environment is integral to Albertans' personal health and well-being. It contributes to economic productivity and affects Albertans' quality of life. The Government of Alberta strives to find the right balance between preserving the province's natural resources and using them to sustain a healthy environment, a prosperous economy and strong communities.

Alberta's environment faces a number of challenges.

1. sustainable economic development
   - *For economic development to be sustainable, Albertans must be responsible stewards of their resources. Heavy industry, fossil fuel-burning utilities and vehicle emissions all contribute to air pollution. Air pollution and acid rain can damage lakes and forests, diminish agricultural output and harm the health of individual Albertans as well as the health of the ecosystem.*

2. competing uses
   - *Natural resource-based industries provide livelihoods for some Albertans and a good quality of life for all citizens of the province. Natural resources such as land and water are used in a variety of ways: for tourism, recreation, agriculture, urban development, and resource extraction projects like mining and forestry. Some of these uses can compete with others or even be mutually exclusive.*

3. water quality and supply
   - *As Alberta's population grows, economic development will put pressure on the province's water resources, on water quality in general and on the safety of drinking water in particular.*

4. environmental solutions
   - *Prudent regulations and environmental standards alone cannot address all environmental problems. Efforts must be made to find other ways of achieving societal goals. Emissions trading permits, tax incentives, user fees and recycling initiatives all try to provide incentives (financial or otherwise) that encourage environmentally friendly behaviour.*

5. international impacts
   - *Many environmental problems—and their solutions—cross geographical and jurisdictional boundaries. This increases the complexity of the issues and necessitates international environmental agreements. The difficulty of reaching consensus on the scope of any given environmental problem, let alone finding solutions, is illustrated by the controversy surrounding the Kyoto Protocol.*

6. environmentally sound goods and services
   - *In the future, the World Trade Organization may allow preferential tariffs for products deemed to have been produced in an environmentally sensitive fashion. If the province's trading partners have environmental concerns about how Alberta produces goods, this could reduce exports and hurt the economy.*

7. environmental contamination
   - *Albertans are becoming increasingly aware of the adverse effects of hazardous wastes, pollution and environmental contamination on human and economic health.*

Albertans' Vision

The following vision for the environment is a composite of Summit delegates' views and the views of the 4,000 Albertans who voiced their opinions during the initial Summit consultations (September–December 2001).

When Albertans think about the future, they would like to see a clean, healthy natural environment where economic development and environmental protection are carefully balanced.

Albertans place a high priority on the protection, preservation and improvement of the environment. They enjoy clean air, clean water, green space and the sustainable use of their resources. They protect the province's biodiversity and the productive farmland that produces the food they eat. They recognize that a healthy environment supports healthy citizens.

Albertans accept personal responsibility for the landscape and support government standards. They are well educated about environmental issues and do their part, as individuals, to reduce pollution and negative impacts on their environment. In partnership with their province's government and business community, they are vigilant, effective stewards who balance the need for resource-based economic development with protection of the environment and smart, sustainable growth. They resolve environmental issues promptly and effectively.

Alberta is a recognized leader in the areas of environmental management and protection. Legislated minimum standards and quantifiable performance measures help to ensure that all Albertans—businesses, industries, communities and individuals—are accountable for good environmental performance.

Future Summit delegates identified a number of obstacles that Albertans will need to overcome in order to realize this vision of the future. They developed a corresponding list of opportunities.

Obstacles

- In some cases, thresholds have been reached as a result of increases in population, land use planning demands, or damage to the natural environment.
- There is a lack of public engagement and awareness about environmental issues.
- There is a lack of commitment to making the environment a priority. There is little appreciation of the links between behaviour and consequences. There is resistance to change.
- Economic instability and the cost of good environmental management can make it difficult to sustain environmentally friendly practices.
- Health care and education have a higher political profile than environmental issues.
- Environmental regulations need to be better enforced.
- Natural disasters such as forest fires, droughts and floods can result in damage to the environment.

Opportunities

- A portion of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund could be used to fund environmental research and conservation initiatives.
- Since the environment is a priority for Alberta's young people, it will probably have a high profile in the future.
- Alberta is rich in biodiversity.
- There are opportunities to develop alternative power sources that could generate new business opportunities.
- Alberta can be a world leader in developing alternative and renewable energy sources and in establishing models for integrated decision making that balances economic, environmental and social issues.
- Alberta has a strong, diverse economy and a responsive government.
- Value-added resource development and value-added agriculture provide opportunities to maximize economic benefit, while at the same time minimizing negative impacts on the environment.
- Alberta's water resources could be better utilized.
- Compliance with environmental protection standards provides market advantages. It demonstrates environmentally responsible economic development to retailers who purchase raw materials.

Guiding Principles

Alberta's environmental strategies must be sustainable, cost-effective, founded on solid science, based on best practices and regulated by measurable standards.

Albertans must be good stewards of their environment. This means that individuals, industry, governments and communities take responsibility for the health of the environment and are accountable for their actions. It also means that the strategies Albertans design and implement today must benefit both present and future generations.

Good environmental practice includes conservation, recycling, waste management and protecting Alberta's biodiversity and water resources.

Conservation, energy efficiency and finding alternatives to conventional energy sources are important for protecting the environment.

Education is the key to environmental awareness, which helps to ensure a healthy environment. If all Albertans understand their options and the consequences of their actions, they will make responsible decisions that help sustain the environment.

Research and technology are important tools for creating economic opportunities that are good for the environment. Research supports a better understanding of environmental impacts and best practices.

Environmental decisions must be based on sound science. There must be transparency, accountability and responsibility in the decision-making process.

Good environmental management depends on regulation, incentives and planning.

Alberta should strive to be a world leader in environmental matters and bring various agencies, sectors and stakeholders together. Consultations about the environment should include a diversity of groups.

Alberta must balance economic development with environmental protection. These two concepts are interdependent. Economic and environmental costs and benefits must be distributed fairly.

Strategies and Ideas for Action

The following is a summary of delegates' deliberations at the Alberta Future Summit 2002 in Red Deer, February 4–5, 2002. In most cases, the strategies had the support of all the delegates in the Environment group. There was less consensus about some of the specific ideas for action.

DEVELOP AN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PLAN.

I Develop a long-term environmental protection plan that is well researched, proactive and founded on solid science. The plan must include sustainable strategies, enforceable standards and measurable results. Governments, businesses, communities and individual citizens should be partners in the development and implementation of the plan.

1. Establish a decision-making framework based on the principle of sustainable development.
2. Ensure that environmental policy is integrated across all three orders of government—municipal, provincial and federal.
3. Examine other leading environmental programs and adopt proven best practices.
4. Implement a mandatory, consistent environmental policy for all communities in Alberta.
5. Review and restructure environmental regulations and the associated approval processes.

ESTABLISH ENVIRONMENTAL FUNDING.

II Establish ongoing, reliable funding for environmental research and conservation initiatives.

1. Establish an environmental initiative fund to support environmental and conservation initiatives that have measurable objectives. The fund should be established immediately and founded on a 20-year plan that is subject to annual reviews. $500 million should be invested to establish the fund.

   Summit delegates proposed a number of related options:
   - *establishing a venture capital fund for environmental initiatives (Emissions fees might be used as a source of revenue for the fund.)*
   - *establishing a reserve fund to preserve Alberta's biodiversity for future generations*
   - *designating a portion of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund for environmental research and conservation*

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- The funds should come from the government's general revenues or from a special assessment on industry.
- Local businesses should contribute to their communities as responsible corporate citizens.
- Develop partnerships in which private sector dollars are matched with public funds and used to fund research and development.

USE INCENTIVES AND REWARDS.

III Implement a program of incentives to reward and encourage good environmental behaviour and punish bad performers.

A number of Summit delegates felt that environmental protection could not be self-regulated by industry. They also recognized that environmental regulations could have a huge economic impact on corporations. They suggested that industry leaders had to want to change and proposed the implementation of incentives to reward environmental "good practices" that meet and exceed government standards.

Summit delegates proposed a number of options that would provide incentives for individuals and corporations to protect the environment.

1. Establish a process which ensures that those who place demands on the environment pay for this privilege and those who pollute the environment pay the costs of clean-up. Implement a system of incentives to encourage environmental practices that exceed the required standards.

2. Work with the federal government to provide tax incentives to encourage environmental protection and preservation.
   - *One such incentive might be tax credits to encourage landowners to preserve natural areas (for example, ponds on farmland and fence-line trees) for future generations.*

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Establish a fund to help develop energy-efficient buildings.
- Base farm support programs on environmentally sustainable practices.
- Initiate legal reform to increase the cost of failing to adhere to environmental protection legislation.
- Provide tax breaks for individuals who practice conservation or protect the environment by using alternative fuels or green methods of treating waste.

EDUCATE ALBERTANS ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT.

IV Implement multi-level environmental education programs to foster awareness and encourage action that will ensure the ecological integrity and sustainability of Alberta's environment.

1. Include environmental education in Alberta's school curriculum.
   - *Hire qualified environmental educators to write this curriculum, which could include field trips to recycling plants, waste management plants and industries that use environmentally safe processes and technologies.*
   - *Involve the industrial sector in the development and implementation of environmental curriculum.*
   - *Ensure that curriculum materials are based on good environmental science.*

2. Ensure that environmental information is communicated through informal channels as well as through formal education.

3. Improve public awareness and understanding of environmental issues.
   - *Ensure that Albertans of all ages have access to information about the environment. Provide "cradle to grave" environmental education.*

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Use research projects and volunteer speakers' bureaus to involve students in environmental development and education.
- Ensure that curriculum materials are based on solid, unbiased sources.
- Set training standards and provide incentives to encourage young people to enter the environmental field.
- Institute postsecondary research partnerships.
- Ensure that environmental education—at all levels—emphasizes the importance of citizen participation in the political process needed to effect change and protect the environment.
- Involve the public as active participants in protecting the environment. Draw on a variety of information sources, including the traditional knowledge of Aboriginal elders.
- Establish recycling programs in rural Alberta.

PROMOTE GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES.

V Promote innovative resource management practices and ensure that the use of our natural resources will not result in environmental damage.

1. Promote a wide variety of best practices—ranging from sustainable, value-added agriculture to community-based composting, increased use of public transportation and smoke-free environments.

2. Diversify energy sources.

3. Diversify the economy to reduce Alberta's reliance on petroleum.

4. Research wind energy, renewable energy sources and other alternatives to fossil fuels.

5. Encourage re-use and recycling and increase Albertans' awareness and know-how about these topics.

SET STANDARDS AND MONITOR PERFORMANCE.

VI Set standards, evaluate performance and establish monitoring procedures to protect the environment and improve environmental conditions across the province.

1. Commission a report on the status of Alberta's environment. Use the report to develop a conservation blueprint.

2. Establish and enforce measurable scientific standards. Monitor and enforce compliance with established standards and environmental regulations.

3. Show leadership in adopting emissions-trading protocols.

4. Implement the Kyoto Protocol.

Albertans who participated in the Future Summit public consultations were of two minds on this issue. Some supported the Kyoto Protocol; others opposed Kyoto in its present form.

A similar division of opinion was expressed by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

SOME DELEGATES EXPRESSED THEIR SUPPORT FOR KYOTO.

- Albertans must be educated on impact of the agreement now! Tomorrow is too late. Kyoto or something similar is inevitable worldwide. Alberta, instead of fighting the agreement, should use its resources to become an early adopter and take advantage of the lower cost of early compliance. China, on the other hand, will pay terrible costs 10 or 15 years from now, when countries have no choice but to comply.
- Make a commitment to the Kyoto Protocol. Decrease emission levels. Offer incentives to industries that reduce emissions.
- Create an Albertan Kyoto Protocol. Allocate emissions limits for industries. If they go over the limit, fine them.
- Capitalize on Kyoto by developing technologies that are environmentally friendly.

SOME DELEGATES EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ABOUT KYOTO.

- We need to address the potential for Canada to adopt the Kyoto Protocol. Albertans need to understand how our economy will be affected. The required changes in oil- and gas-related industrial activity will drastically reduce our revenues. A number of direct costs will be passed on to individuals in the form of higher house-building and transportation costs. The result will be a major downturn in the economy.
- How can we reasonably adopt this if our major trading partner—the United States—does not? If Canada adopts the Kyoto Protocol, Alberta's industries will bear the largest share of costs.
- Kyoto Protocol. Climate change. What is the impact? Who will pay?

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- There is a need for government-sponsored environmental impact assessments. There is also a need for government control of development.
- Determine if existing standards on air and water pollution are adequate. Evaluate and monitor the effects of air and water pollution on the health of Albertans.
- Include educators, environmentalists, industry representatives and other stakeholders in environmental decision making and policy development.
- Ensure that Alberta's environmental standards and policies reflect Alberta's priorities and needs.
- Raise environmental protection standards.
- Industry should not be self-regulating when it comes to the environment.
- Improve communications between government departments to expedite licensing and approvals.
- Appoint an environmental ombudsman with the authority and resources to investigate and publicly report problematic practices or alleged breaches of environmental protection legislation.

PROTECT ALBERTA'S LAND AND WATER RESOURCES.

VII Promote regional planning initiatives that safeguard Alberta's land and water resources, protect ecologically sensitive areas and preserve green space while fostering environmentally friendly economic development.

1. Implement a plan for "smart growth." Concentrate development and set aside green space.

2. Limit urban sprawl. Protect quality farmland around urban areas.

3. Ensure that land use planning takes environmental costs into account and that land tenure protocols employ best practices.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- Consider the Portland, Oregon governance model for green space and the Maryland model for urban growth boundaries.
- Create regional planning authorities which have a mandate to make decisions.
- Consider sensible land stewardship from a broad perspective. Proactive protection is required. For example, government protection of habitat and forest is needed to protect our water supply.
- Water quality is a huge issue across Canada. It should be a high priority for an expanding population.
- Water needs to be protected by law. It must not be sold or even transferred. Once it's gone, it's gone.
- Protect groundwater recharge areas.
- Protect groundwater quality from the impacts of large feedlots.
- No interbasin water transfers!
- Harness unused water resources.
- Could water diversion improve the economy by increasing the amount of productive land?
- Irrigation uses water. Little gets to the plants. Much evaporates (and doesn't fall back in Alberta) and much runs off in drainage. The evaporation leaves salts. So don't farm land in arid areas!
- Deal with water issues wisely. We will have to sell water to the US. Southeastern Alberta needs water or it will depopulate and die. Water is a renewable resource.
- Do we or do we not have an abundant supply of fresh water?
- Commit to a system of parks and protected areas and ensure effective management and maintenance.

My future Alberta gets most of its power from natural resources like wind and water. As Alberta continues to grow, we make technological advances to make not only our lives, but many people's lives better.

My Alberta Contest Entry
Pamela Tynerson, Lethbridge
Age Category: 13–16

The following material was compiled from input provided by over 4,000 Albertans who took part in the initial Future Summit consultations (September–December 2001). In many cases, this material supports the strategies developed by Summit delegates. It also includes a number of alternative viewpoints and approaches which should be considered.

Albertans place a high value on the environment.

In the first phase of the Future Summit consultations, Albertans identified a wide range of concerns related to environmental protection and resource protection and management. These included:

- preservation and expansion of parks and natural areas
  - *Many people saw green spaces, protected areas, special places, environmentally sensitive areas and wilderness as an integral part of Alberta. They saw preservation of these areas as important for Alberta's future.*

- water quality, treatment, availability and supply
  - *Albertans identified the need to maintain drinking water quality, to ensure proper water treatment in all communities and to protect watersheds. A few Albertans opposed water exports and dam-building.*

- forestry management practices
  - *Some Albertans were concerned about over-harvesting and spoke about the need for reforestation. Some commented on the impact of cutlines on the landscape.*

- sustainable agriculture
  - *Albertans expressed concerns about the need to protect agricultural lands from industrial development and urban sprawl. They also discussed the need for water conservation and environmentally responsible agricultural practices. A number of Albertans were concerned about the impacts of chemical use and confined feeding operations.*

- air and water quality, pollution and waste management
  - *Industrial emissions were of particular concern. Some Albertans addressed issues related to the environmental impacts of fossil fuels. A few specifically noted concerns about greenhouse gases or climate change.*

- the impacts of population growth and economic development on parks, natural areas and agricultural land
  - *Some Albertans proposed that growth and development should be controlled.*

Albertans saw many challenges related to the environment. Many spoke about the need to find the right balance between the environment and the economy. Albertans also saw new opportunities for the future. They saw the development of nonresource-based or renewable resource-based industries as having economic as well as environmental benefits.

Albertans saw environmental stewardship and sustainable development as key elements for preserving and protecting our environment. They believed that education, research, technology and innovation, regulation, incentives and planning will also play a role. Many felt that achieving a sustainable future will require changes in attitudes and behaviour.

A few Albertans recognized a global perspective in environmental management. Some noted the need for global as well as provincial or individual action. A few recognized a need for international standards and called for increased participation in international initiatives to address environmental issues.

Some Albertans commented on the need for political will to make the environment a priority and foresaw serious environmental problems if immediate action was not taken. The need for adequate funding and staffing for environmental and resource programs was a related issue.

Environmental Stewardship

Albertans advocated environmental stewardship. This means that individuals, industry, governments and communities take responsibility for the environment and are accountable for their actions. A variety of approaches to stewardship were proposed. These included:

- making the environment a priority
- taking a long-term (10- to 200-year) approach to environmental considerations
- reducing consumption

Alternative Energy and Energy Efficiency

Finding alternatives to conventional energy sources was the most frequently recommended approach for protecting the environment.

Some Albertans proposed investing in research and developing wind, solar, biomass, fuel cell and hydro energy sources. A few called for the development of cleaner-burning conventional fuels such as "clean coal."

Many Albertans recommended energy conservation or efficiency measures. These included energy-efficient technologies, machinery, buildings and homes.

Reducing the impact of vehicles was an important issue. Albertans were concerned about two aspects of this issue:

- reducing emissions from conventional vehicles
- limiting urban sprawl

They recommended the implementation of emissions standards and mandatory testing and the development of vehicles (electric cars, for example) powered by alternative energy sources. Many Albertans suggested public transit as a solution; some suggested high-speed inter-city rail links; a few suggested car-pooling and cycling.

A few Albertans recommended implementing the Kyoto Protocol; a few opposed Kyoto in its present form.

Environmental Education

Albertans recognized that education is critical for ensuring a healthy environment. They felt that all segments of society—adults, children, communities, industry, leaders and decision-makers—need to understand the value of the environment and how to protect it. If all Albertans understand their options and the consequences of their actions, they will make responsible decisions that help sustain the environment.

Albertans proposed that environmental education should be formal—through the school system—as well as informal. They suggested using advertisements, awareness and promotional programs, social marketing campaigns and wilderness awareness programs.

Albertans believed that education is the key to environmental awareness. Some Albertans mentioned the economic implications of environmental education. They saw education as a critical part of a knowledge-based economy because it provides access to information on green business developments around the world.

Many Albertans believed that schools and government have a responsibility for environmental education, awareness raising and information sharing.

Research and Technology

Many Albertans commented on the importance of technology in creating economic opportunities that are good for the environment. Some saw research as supporting the development of new technologies, particularly those related to alternative energy and energy efficiency. They felt that research supports a better understanding of environmental impacts and best practices. It provides a foundation for better environmental decision making, legislation and standard setting. It also plays an important role in environmental monitoring and information gathering.

Recycling and Waste Management

Albertans expressed strong support for recycling programs. A number raised other waste management issues, including the need to reduce packaging, reduce the need for landfills, stop littering and do more composting.

Many Albertans saw recycling as good for the environment. Some suggested that recycling creates new economic opportunities.

Albertans suggestions with regard to recycling included:

- expanding recycling programs to more communities, including rural communities
- building more recycling facilities
- increasing the number of items that can be recycled
- expanding and supporting the market for recycled materials to make recycling more profitable
- providing incentives such as higher deposit fees
- providing tax reductions to companies and businesses that implement recycling programs or produce goods from recycled materials
- imposing garbage taxes as a way of encouraging recycling

Many Albertans saw recycling as an individual responsibility, but some noted that industries and communities should also recycle. A number saw a role for government in:

- making recycling a priority
- funding education and promotion programs
- promoting the benefits of recycling

Most Albertans saw recycling as a voluntary measure, but some felt it should be mandatory. Some saw Alberta as a leader in recycling.

Regulation, Incentives and Planning

Many Albertans felt a regulatory approach was needed to ensure good environmental performance—particularly by industry. They proposed strong environmental legislation, standards and monitoring, along with strong or stronger enforcement and penalties. A few opposed the privatization of parks and the concept of industry self-regulation with regard to environmental issues.

Some Albertans proposed using incentives and taxes to reward and encourage good environmental behaviour and punish bad performers. A few suggested other alternatives, including:

- building environmental costs into economic decision making
- implementing user fees
- introducing emissions credits or permits

Many Albertans wanted to see the province's parks and natural areas maintained and/or expanded. Some wanted to see development in these areas limited or altogether prohibited. Some proposed ecotourism as an economic activity that would fit with limited development in parks or natural areas.

Albertans proposed a number of other strategies for reducing negative environmental impacts and addressing resource development issues. These included appropriate, efficient integrated resource management, land use and regional planning. Albertans felt that planning would help manage or limit growth and development, protect specific areas and curb urban sprawl.

Partners in Environmental Protection

Albertans believed that individuals, governments, communities and businesses share responsibility for the health of the environment.

Many Albertans believed that governments have a significant responsibility. Most references were directed at the provincial government, but some Albertans commented on the role of municipal governments in areas such as planning and recycling. A few called for provincial financial assistance to municipalities for programs such as water treatment and energy efficiency.

Albertans saw the government's role as one of environmental regulation and leadership. They saw Alberta leading the world in environmental matters and bringing various agencies, sectors and stakeholders together.

Many Albertans felt that industry has an important role in environmental protection. They felt that industry was responsible for many environmental problems and should therefore be responsible for cleaning up the environment. Albertans also felt that industry will have a prominent role in implementing the new opportunities offered by alternative fuels, energy efficiency and nonresource-based industries. Realizing these opportunities will require cooperation across many sectors.

Governance

Background

The topic of governance covers a broad range of issues—from intergovernmental relations, policy-making and legislation to social welfare spending, infrastructure development and access to services. The concept of governance is not static: it evolves to allow for the changing needs of society.

Governments, whether municipal, provincial or federal, have a direct and substantial impact on Albertans' daily lives. Roles and responsibilities for individuals, communities, organizations and all orders of government must be clarified. As its fiscal position is better than that of other provinces, Alberta has the opportunity to demonstrate leadership in a Canadian context.

Alberta is a committed member of a united Canada and shares responsibilities and powers with the federal government. The federal government is responsible for areas such as national defence, trade and commerce, the banking and monetary system, criminal law, citizenship, fisheries and aspects of transportation. The province is responsible for education, civil rights, the administration of justice, health care, natural resources and municipal institutions. Municipalities are responsible for a number of programs and services, including policing, roadway construction, water and sanitation services, recreation and cultural programs, public transit and libraries. Maintaining adequate financial resources to pay for these programs and services is a challenge for municipalities.

Many of today's issues cross jurisdictions and geographical boundaries and therefore require the cooperation of multiple parties to be dealt with properly. Through bodies such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Alberta can capitalize on opportunities and access key international markets. Trans-national issues such as the environment cannot be addressed by any one government on its own.

Today's diverse, complex and increasingly interconnected society poses many governance challenges, including:

- shared governance
    - *Private and public roles are blending together. To be successful, the government needs to engage individuals, businesses, organizations and communities in the process of governing society, the economy and the environment.*

- jurisdictional issues
  - *The federal government is establishing national standards in areas of provincial jurisdiction through the use of conditional federal transfers. In some cases, the federal government is bypassing the provinces entirely and delivering services which fall under provincial jurisdiction directly to municipalities or individuals.*

- service delivery
  - *The adoption of technologies like e-mail and the accessibility of web-published information are increasing expectations that the government will deliver services quickly. Current trends toward community government challenge the notion of uniform standards for service delivery and can result in different levels of service delivery in different communities.*

- regulations and standards
  - *Governments need to provide appropriate, effective and efficient regulatory regimes and standards while attempting to minimize the overall regulatory burden.*

- accountability
  - *The nature of the relationships between governments and stakeholders is changing. Outcomes and performance measures are aimed at keeping government accountable and responsive to the needs of the public. However, voter apathy and a general distrust of government by the public demonstrate the need for further improvements in this area.*

- infrastructure
  - *Governments have traditionally been seen as the major providers and custodians of infrastructure. New approaches are now being used. These include public and private sector partnerships, privatization, user fees and innovative financing techniques.*

- fiscal imbalances
  - *The gap between "have" and "have-not" provinces in Canada continues to grow. The federal government may face pressure to increase existing transfer payments to have-not provinces in order to rectify this imbalance.*

- the impact of new technologies
  - *The world is growing more complicated. New ethical issues are presented by innovation and invention.*

Albertans' Vision

The following vision for governance is a composite of Summit delegates' views and the views of the 4,000 Albertans who voiced their opinions during the initial Summit consultations (September–December 2001).

When Albertans think about the future, they would like to see an innovative, effective, efficient, socially aware government that is accountable, responsible and responsive to its citizens.

The Alberta government represents the interests of both rural and urban Albertans and facilitates sustainable, diversified, environmentally responsible development.

The government is small, flexible and visionary. It provides strong leadership and a stable policy environment. It fosters self-reliance, supports locally based problem-solving and encourages the involvement of Albertans. It is cooperative, collaborative and open to citizen participation. All citizens are equal and there is no discrimination.

The government is accountable and fiscally responsible. It provides the programs and services needed by Albertans, yet maintains a competitive tax regime.

The government continues to balance its budgets and ensures that Alberta remains debt free. It plans for the long term and is prepared to respond to changing needs and issues.

Alberta has an effective voice in the national arena. All orders of government work collaboratively. Clear roles ensure that efforts are not duplicated.

Albertans recognize their responsibilities to other Canadians and to the world. Our models of governance are respected by others. Alberta's political leaders are also respected. They honour the principles of citizen engagement and decision making.

Albertans trust their government.

Future Summit delegates identified a number of obstacles that Albertans will need to overcome in order to realize this vision of the future. They developed a corresponding list of opportunities.

Obstacles

- Albertans prefer short-term, ad hoc solutions and find it difficult to look beyond the present.
- The current division of powers between federal, provincial, municipal and Aboriginal authorities poses challenges to effective governance.
- Citizen apathy results in a lack of awareness of available alternatives and distances citizens from their governments.
- There is a resistance to change and a lack of will and commitment to take action.
- It is not possible to "stop the business of government" even when change must be implemented.
- There are disparities between rural and urban parts of the province.
- There are many competing interests.
- Vested interests and turf protection are found both within and outside the government.
- Conflicts of interest occur. There is a perception that governments and agencies cannot conduct impartial reviews of their own operations.
- There is a lack of appreciation for diversity.
- The government is not representative.
- The *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIP) is costly and time-consuming.
- Individuals within government departments may feel that "giving up information" is equal to "giving up control."
- Political party influences on government diminish transparency and accountability.
- The need to work with others—federally, in North America and globally—can sometimes be an obstacle.
- There is a lack of resources and criteria to evaluate what currently exists. It is difficult to define measures of evaluation and accountability.
- Legislation poses barriers.
- The funding structure of political campaigns poses barriers.

Opportunities

- Participatory governance uses consultation and technology to increase public involvement.
- Albertans recognize that good governance is based on accountability, transparency, inclusiveness, fairness and effective communication that seeks and values public input.
- The government can focus its efforts on its core businesses.
- Service delivery can be improved.
- There are opportunities for partnerships. Federal, provincial and municipal governments, communities, the business sector and other organizations can collaborate and coordinate their work more effectively in the future.
- Alberta has the experience, the ability, and the resources to support change and develop long-term strategic plans.
- Alberta has the opportunity to establish itself as a leader and world-class model of good governance.
- Albertans have the ability to identify and grasp strategic opportunities.
- Legislative reform is possible.
- Alberta has many strengths, including the ability to adopt new technology readily.
- Alberta's communities are diverse.

Guiding Principles

Summit delegates identified a number of principles which provide the foundation for good governance.

Governance must be for the common good. Conflicting needs, interests and values must be balanced in a way that meets the broadest interests of the community while respecting the rights of individuals.

Good governance must be visionary, strategic and relevant. It must define and address present-day problems in a manner that takes future needs into consideration.

Good governments must be accountable and ethical in their actions and policies.

Fiscal responsibility, accountability and measurable outcomes are important components of good governance.

Good governments must be accessible to their constituents, representative of their electorate, and responsive to citizens' needs. They must listen and communicate effectively, facilitate citizen participation, provide leadership, and set strategic directions that define short- and long-term goals. They must recognize when change is needed and respond accordingly.

Good governance relies on the participation of its citizens and empowers citizens to become involved.

Strategies and Ideas for Action

The following is a summary of delegates' deliberations at the Alberta Future Summit 2002 in Red Deer, February 4–5, 2002. In most cases, the strategies had the support of all the delegates in the Governance group. There was less consensus about some of the specific ideas for action.

EMPOWER ALBERTA'S COMMUNITIES.

I Design a governance structure that will empower Alberta's communities and ensure that they are fairly represented in government.

Empowered communities are better equipped to be self-sustaining communities. Empowerment results when Albertans participate in the political process—by voting in elections and in other ways.

1. Examine the current governance structure and electoral process and identify problem areas with regard to:
   - *the balance between rural and urban representation*
   - *the representation of Aboriginal people*
   - *inclusivity and citizen participation*

2. Design a new governance structure to address identified problem areas.
   - *Implement electoral reform based on proportional representation. Balance urban and rural representation.*
   - *Ensure that Aboriginal communities have a guaranteed minimum number of MLAs. This will increase the capacity of Aboriginal people to provide services for Aboriginal people.*

3. Review the role and influence of financial contributions to political parties.

4. Involve citizens in decision making and increase citizen participation in politics.
   - *Elicit citizens' input on policy decisions.*
   - *Increase participation in the electoral process. Insist on mandatory voting.*
   - *Increase political participation by enhancing education.*

5. Increase citizens' access to the decision-making process by building partnerships between all orders of government and communities.
   - *Empower local authorities through more effective partnerships.*
   - *Develop lateral partnerships with other orders of government.*

6. Enable communities to be self-sustaining.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- In many cases (children's issues, health issues) decision making is in the hands of one group while funding is controlled by another order of government.
- Redefine electoral boundaries.
- Review the process of downloading and its impact on municipalities and nonprofit organizations.
- Individual citizens should have the right to bring an issue "to the ballot"—to put a legislative proposal to a province-wide referendum.

DEFINE GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES.

II Launch an independent audit to clarify and define the responsibilities and accountability of the Alberta Government.

1. Review the roles, responsibilities and reporting structure of the provincial government and government agencies, including municipalities, boards, commissions and other bodies.

2. Review the processes used to develop government policy.

3. Review the Alberta Government's core businesses. Identify who is served by them, determine what works and what doesn't, and identify what is clearly the responsibility of the government.
   - *Every two years, responsibilities and core businesses should be reviewed by the government in consultation with taxpayers and recipients of government services as well as program experts, consultants and external advisors. It may be advisable to conduct the reviews in conjunction with the business planning cycle.*

- *The reviews should assess the viability and relevance of government activities. They should also define service needs, identify required skills, allocate resources, eliminate the duplication of services and determine the most effective means of service delivery. Some government programs may be eliminated. The responsibility for others may be delegated to other agencies, or the delivery of services may be contracted out.*

4. If the reviews recommend new methods of service delivery, establish a transition process.
   - *Negotiate service delivery arrangements with nongovernment agencies, as required.*
   - *Review and amend legislation and policy to facilitate and support new service delivery arrangements.*

5. Communicate the results of the reviews to the people of Alberta.

6. Establish transparent accountability measures for the government and its service agencies.
   - *Establish monitoring and reporting mechanisms to ensure that agencies are accountable to the government and the government, in turn, is accountable to taxpayers.*
   - *Evaluate the effectiveness and delivery of programs on a regular basis.*

The following comment was made by a delegate during the Summit gallery walk.

- Municipal governments are a product of the province and are "underpowered."

REVIEW THE STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT.

III If warranted by the independent audit, conduct an arm's-length evaluation of the effectiveness of the current governance structure, with a view to restructuring.

1. Commit the resources required to conduct regular reviews of government performance.

2. Establish a set election date.

3. Review the process for appointing ministers.
   - *Define minimum terms for cabinet ministers.*
   - *Match the experience and skills of politicians to the requirements of ministerial portfolios.*
   - *Simplify and streamline portfolios.*

4. Facilitate cross-ministry initiatives.

5. Provide opportunities for the public to get involved in the legislative process and to ask questions of all MLAs during question period.

6. Encourage innovation in public management by rewarding it.

7. Minimize middle management.

8. Develop an MLA annual review process.

9. Ensure that policy committees include representatives from all parties. Elected officials have the final say in government decisions.

The following comments were made by delegates during the Summit gallery walk.

- We must open our minds to the possibility that what Albertans want cannot be achieved by small government. Big government, by definition, is not bad.
- Review and revise the budget process used by government. Allow funds to carry over into another budget year.
- Consultation with municipalities is critical.
- There are times when taxpayers should have the final say.
- If you don't have enough middle management, where will you get the leaders of the future? Eliminating middle management is creating a leadership vacuum as the boomers retire.
- Be aware of the impact of new regulations and legislation passed by higher orders of government.

FORMALIZE THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS.

IV Create the capability for strategic planning to help Albertans cope with the demands of an increasingly turbulent global environment.

1. Appoint a Chief Strategic Planning Officer for the province in 2002.

2. Appoint a Premier's Advisory Committee on Strategic Planning. The committee should be appointed in 2002 and given the mandate to:
   - *design a world-class model for province-wide strategic planning*
   - *report to the government by April 2004*
   - *implement the strategic planning model designed by the advisory committee in 2005. Turn 2005 centennial into a major future-visioning celebration.*

3. Develop strategies that balance immediate and future needs.

COMMUNICATE.

V Develop an ongoing, interactive communication plan.

1. Increase the interactivity and user-friendliness of government websites.

2. Recognize that good communication is important for good governance.
   - *Ensure effective, interactive communication at the ministerial level.*
   - *Foster two-way communication.*

The following material was compiled from input provided by over 4,000 Albertans who took part in the initial Future Summit consultations (September–December 2001). In many cases, this material supports the strategies developed by Summit delegates. It also includes a number of alternative viewpoints and approaches which should be considered.

Albertans Working Together

Albertans believed that individual responsibility and public participation will create and sustain a better province in the future. They maintained that individuals should:

- take personal responsibility to improve their own health, education and personal growth
- strive to become lifelong learners
- care for their environment—conserving and recycling resources wherever possible
- set good examples for their children

Albertans noted that individual responsibility was often intertwined with community involvement and volunteerism. They saw participation, responsibility and growth as important factors—both for individuals and for their communities. As one Grade 11 student commented at a Calgary Regional Forum, "We need to be citizens, not residents."

Albertans looked to the provincial government for accountability and leadership in creating the infrastructure that supports community and personal efforts. Most felt that the government was responsible for establishing processes to ensure public participation.

Albertans clearly articulated their pride in Alberta and felt that this should be promoted throughout the province and abroad. They believed that reinvesting and promoting Alberta, its resources and, most importantly, its people will help create and sustain a better province in the future.

The Role of Government

Albertans identified the qualities they valued in their government. These included:

- honesty
- integrity
- accountability
- openness and transparency
- flexibility
- responsiveness
- fiscal responsibility

Albertans saw good government as being small, responsive, efficient and representative. Many suggested that the government should be a facilitator rather than a doer. It should create an environment for success and provide a stable, secure infrastructure within which individuals, businesses and communities can thrive.

Albertans saw the role of government as one of leadership. They wanted their government to provide a vision, set long-term strategies and plan for the future. They wanted their government to make good choices for the people of Alberta and to be willing to make hard decisions. They saw the government as being inclusive, fair, and socially and environmentally responsible.

Albertans wanted their government to consult with them and solicit their input in decision making. They believed their government should support freedom of expression, communicate openly, share information, gather ideas and facilitate discussion.

Albertans advocated cooperation between all orders of government—municipal, provincial and federal. They felt that a cooperative approach would avoid the duplication of services and build strong partnerships to support communities.

Albertans saw the government as having responsibility for legislation. They wanted the government to define policy directions and to set, monitor and enforce standards—particularly with regard to the environment, health, safety and education. They saw the government as an efficient, careful steward of the province's human and natural resources.

Albertans wanted their government to be fiscally responsible and debt free. Although there was no consensus on approaches and limits, many Albertans said they wanted the government to fund and support programs and services to meet people's needs. Many wanted the government to invest in the future—particularly in the areas of education and research.

Many Albertans believed the government should provide incentives for innovation, develop foreign markets, encourage economic diversification, and create a tax climate that promotes business growth and attracts investment. They felt that the government should promote Alberta and the Alberta Advantage—within Canada and around the world.

Alberta's Future Role Within Canada

Most Albertans saw our province as wealthy, vibrant and well situated to lead the country in a variety of ways—through strong social programs, fiscal responsibility, responsible government, innovation, new investment, environmental responsibility and alternative energy development. Many also stressed Alberta's ability to be a leader in public health, education and the promotion of quality of life. They provided several reasons:

- Alberta is a good fiscal manager.
- Alberta has the necessary resources to lead the country in service delivery.
- Albertans' innovative, pioneer spirit allows them to be efficient and creative in service delivery.
- A number of Albertans proposed that Alberta should look beyond its role in Canada to its role in the world.

Economic, Social and Environmental Prosperity

Albertans cited the economy and the natural and social environment as areas in which Alberta was best situated to play a leadership role within Canada. They also saw these areas as being important for Alberta itself. They suggested that Alberta focus on developing its strength in these areas so as to lead Canada by example.

Many Albertans saw the province continuing to flourish economically. They saw Alberta's fiscal acumen and technological innovation as examples for the rest of the country. While many Albertans indicated that energy would remain a central part of the province's economy, they believed prosperity, innovation and diversification were just as important for Alberta's continued prosperity. They believed that economic development and investment should be actively encouraged and promoted by the province.

Many Albertans felt that Alberta, as the most prosperous province in Canada, would attract skilled workers from across the country and from abroad, further enhancing the depth of knowledge and skill of the province's workforce. Many believed that diversification and immigration were tied to Alberta's ability to be a technological innovator and leader in Canada. Alternative energy development, research and development, and connectivity (through initiatives like the SuperNet) were cited as examples.

Many Albertans saw the province—now and in the future—as the most socially prosperous in the country. They defined social prosperity in terms of the quality and availability of public services such as health care and education. Many Albertans believed that ensuring a high quality of life for all Albertans, including children, the elderly and less fortunate citizens, was an important role for the province.

A number of Albertans identified the environment as an important component of social prosperity. They believed Alberta should be a leader in managing environmental issues. Although conservation, sustainable growth and resource development were mentioned as important factors, resource development and environmental awareness and stewardship were not considered to be mutually exclusive.

Canadian Federalism

Almost invariably, Albertans saw Alberta's role as one of leadership in Canada. Many saw Alberta as a strong and equal partner within Confederation. Most emphasized provincial power and the need for greater provincial influence in federal–provincial relations.

Albertans identified several significant issues:

- the need for interprovincial and regional cooperation
- the need for cooperative federal–provincial relations
- the need to strengthen the federation
- the need to clarify provincial and federal jurisdictions
- the importance of national unity and national diversity
- the need to rationalize fiscal arrangements between orders of government
  (That is, higher orders of government should not download costs onto lower orders.)
- the need for freer trade and mobility between provinces
- the need for nation-wide, standardized professional credentials

Many Albertans expressed support for the principle of redistributing wealth among the regions of Canada. A small number thought Alberta was too pushy in its federal–provincial relations and believed the federal government should play a larger role. Another small group called on Alberta to be more autonomous from the federal government and a few Albertans called for Alberta's separation from Canada.

A small minority promoted Alberta- or western-separatism as an alternative to leadership within Canada. Another small group questioned the need for a provincial order of government and stressed the importance of federal leadership.

The Future Summit Process

The Future Summit Process

The Alberta Future Summit 2002 was a province-wide public consultation designed to give citizens a voice in planning for Alberta's future. Officially launched by Premier Ralph Klein on September 28, 2001, the Future Summit process included four steps:

- consulting with Albertans (September–December 2001)
- compiling the input
- the Alberta Future Summit 2002, Red Deer, February 4–5, 2002
- preparing the report

Consulting with Albertans

Albertans of all ages and from all walks of life responded to the call to help chart the course for Alberta's future. From September through December 2001, over 4,000 citizens contributed their thoughts, ideas and insights.

More than 2,300 Albertans completed the Future Summit workbook, *Imagine Our Tomorrow*, which contained 18 questions designed to generate a broad range of possibilities for the future. Albertans of all ages responded to the questions. Almost 75% submitted their responses online.

More than 40 Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) hosted over 60 Future Summit consultations for their constituents. More than 1,000 Albertans took part. Eleven day-long Regional Forums were held at nine centres across Alberta. More than 800 Albertans participated.

CENTRE	DATE	CO-CHAIRS
Edmonton	October 10, 2001	Paul Byrne, President, Grant MacEwan College Tony Vandermeer, MLA, Edmonton Manning
	October 11, 2001	Steve Snyder, President and CEO, TransAlta Corporation Ian McClelland, MLA, Edmonton Rutherford
Red Deer	October 17, 2001	Irene Lewis, President and CEO, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology Mary Anne Jablonski, MLA, Red Deer North
Calgary	October 24, 2001	Darshan Kailly, President, Canadian Freightways Ltd. Cindy Ady, MLA, Calgary Shaw
	October 25, 2001	Irene Lewis, President and CEO, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology Karen Kryczka, MLA, Calgary West
Peace River	November 7, 2001	Paul Byrne, President, Grant MacEwan College Gary Friedel, MLA, Peace River
Grande Prairie	November 8, 2001	Fred Estlin, Past Chair, Board of Governors, Grande Prairie Regional College Mel Knight, MLA, Grande Prairie–Smoky
Vermilion	November 16, 2001	Mary LeMessurier, former Minister of Culture, Government of Alberta Lloyd Snelgrove, MLA, Vermilion–Lloydminster
Fort McMurray	November 23, 2001	Eric Newell, Chairman and CEO, Syncrude Canada Ltd. Guy Boutilier, MLA, Fort McMurray
Lethbridge	November 27, 2001	Don Lowry, President and CEO, EPCOR Utilities Inc. Broyce Jacobs, MLA, Cardston–Taber–Warner
Medicine Hat	November 28, 2001	Gail Surkan, Mayor of Red Deer Rob Renner, MLA, Medicine Hat

Future Summit Regional Forums

Compiling the Input

From September through December 2001, workbook submissions and other input from Albertans were entered into a state-of-the-art database that was specially customized for the Future Summit. The submissions were reviewed, key concepts identified and the results summarized.

The input from Albertans was grouped into seven broad themes which captured the full range of viewpoints offered by Albertans. Summary reports for each theme were prepared for delegates to the Alberta Future Summit 2002 in Red Deer.

A complete version of the delegates' package is available on the Future Summit website at <www.futuresummit.com**>.**

The Alberta Future Summit 2002

On February 4–5, 2002, 260 delegates gathered in Red Deer to discuss the ideas generated during the initial Future Summit consultations. The delegates' assignment was to build on Albertans' ideas and suggestions and take them a step further. As Premier Klein said at the opening session, their task was to develop "rough 'architectural drawings' for the home that future citizens will call 'their Alberta'."

Using the input from the public consultations as their starting point, Summit delegates drafted strategic directions and ideas for action for the seven areas Albertans had identified as priorities:

- the economy
- learning
- fiscal responsibility
- communities
- health and wellness
- the environment
- governance

The delegates also identified obstacles and opportunities and developed guiding principles for charting the course toward Alberta's future.

the delegates

The 260 Summit delegates represented a broad cross-section of Albertans.

They included experts and private citizens from all age groups and all walks of life. They were working Albertans, business people, volunteers, seniors and students. Alberta's Aboriginal communities were represented, as were the labour sector, arts and cultural groups, sports and recreational organizations, environmental groups, municipalities and the health sector. About a third of the delegates had attended one of the 11 Alberta Future Summit 2002 Regional Forums. Forty-one were youth delegates.

The Summit delegates brought a wealth of experience and ideas to the table. Building on the work from the public consultations, they gave structure and shape to Albertans' vision for the future and developed a series of strategies and ideas for action.

The delegates' task was a monumental one. Over two days of intensive discussion and debate, delegates considered a diversity of opinions and worked hard to find common ground. Sometimes this was not possible, but it is fair to say that, in the process, they came to appreciate and respect viewpoints different from their own. The strategies they developed were based on cooperation and reasonable compromise. They are fine examples of the democratic process at work—and a fine starting point for the decisions that must be made about Alberta's future.

the process

Input from the public consultations (September–December 2001) provided a foundation for the discussions in Red Deer on February 4–5, 2002.

The starting point for the delegate groups' discussions was Albertans' responses to the 18 questions in the Future Summit workbook, *Imagine Our Tomorrow.* **(The workbook questions are posted on the Future Summit website at <**www.futuresummit.com**>.)** Albertans' responses fell into seven themes which helped to define the Future Summit discussion themes—the economy, learning, fiscal responsibility, communities, health and wellness, the environment and governance.

Summit delegates selected up to three preferences with regard to the seven Future Summit themes. They were assigned to a group which dealt with one of their chosen themes. Trained facilitators led each theme group through an interactive, multi-step process based on the premise that there are common end goals, but many ways of achieving them. There were approximately 40 delegates in each group.

Most delegate groups began by reviewing and validating the **vision and values** that had been formulated from Albertans' responses to the first two workbook questions, which were:

1. When you think of Alberta's future, what would you like to see? What key things must be in place to realize this?

2. Sustaining a high quality of life in the future will require decisions and choices. What values should guide Albertans in making these choices?

The delegates added items that had been missed, reinforced key messages, and clarified and expanded upon important points.

Once this work was done, Summit delegates contemplated the **obstacles** that might stand in the way of Albertans' ideal future. They also identified **opportunities** that might help Albertans realize their goals. Then, building on the vision for their theme area, they identified **guiding principles**.

After laying this foundation, each group of delegates drafted a series of **strategic directions** supported by specific **ideas for action**. They began with an exercise designed to get all their ideas on the table. These ideas were grouped, and the delegates formulated strategy statements that encompassed the ideas in each grouping.

Once these draft strategies had been formulated, each group of delegates set off on the first of two Summit **gallery walks**. Leaving their own work on display, the delegates split up to visit other theme groups. Visiting delegates had the opportunity to review, question and add their suggestions to the host group's draft strategies.

Delegates from each Summit theme group had the opportunity to review the work of two other groups. The gallery walk and the resulting interaction between groups achieved two objectives:

- It stimulated cross-sectoral discussion, which helped to identify the interconnections between theme areas and the trade-offs that must be considered in decision making.
- It provided the opportunity for delegates to contribute to the development of strategic directions for more than one theme.

After the second gallery walk, Summit delegates re-assembled in their original groups. Their task was to refine the strategic directions they had developed for their theme. To do this, they needed to consider the input from visiting delegates, although this was not always incorporated into the group's final results. They also needed to build consensus for the final strategies and ideas for action they wished to propose for consideration by the Government of Alberta.

The result is the strategies and ideas for action presented in this report.

Delegates to the Alberta Future Summit 2002

Ms. Robin Acton
Edmonton

Mr. Colin Agur
St. Albert

Mr. Joenel Alcantara
Calgary

Ms. Dagny Alston
Edmonton

Mr. Pierre Alvarez
Calgary

Dr. Jeffrey Anderson
Fort McMurray

Mr. David Anderson
Edmonton

Ms. Linda Andres
Bassano

Ms. Brandie Archibald-Ferris
Lethbridge

Mr. Taylor Armstrong
Youngstown

Mr. Ashid Kumar Bahl
Calgary

Ms. Elisabeth Ballermann
Edmonton

Mr. John Ballheim
Calgary

Mr. Gary Bardell
Calgary

Mr. Bob Barss
Wainwright

Mr. Joe Bath
Fort McMurray

Mr. Delfin Bautista
Calgary

Mr. Douglas Bedard
Edmonton

Ms. Jann Beeston
Hanna

Ms. Eileen Bell
Edmonton

Mr. Jerry Bennis
Peace River

Ms. Sonia Bitar
Edmonton

Mr. Greer Black
Edmonton

Mr. Oliver Bladek
Calgary

Ms. Carol Blyth
Calgary

Mr. Larry Booi
Edmonton

Ms. Julie Brown
Fort McMurray

Mr. Allan Buchignani
Calgary

Mr. Allan Buck
Smoky Lake

Ms. Susan Bulmer
Edmonton

Ms. Joan Cain
Fort McMurray

Ms. Mary Cameron
Edmonton

Ms. Donna Campbell
Calgary

Mr. Bob Campbell
Lethbridge

Mr. John Carpay
Edmonton

Mr. John Carpenter
Calgary

Ms. Pat Cavill
Calgary

Ms. Eva Chan
Calgary

Mr. Luke Chan
Calgary

Ms. Kim Chevrier
Edmonton

Mr. Karl Chomlak
Beauvallon

Mr. Bob Church
Airdrie

Mr. Dylan Clarkson
Banff

Ms. Lisa Clyburn
Edmonton

Ms. Diane Colley-Urquhart
Calgary

Ms. Margaret Coutts
Red Deer

Mr. Douglas Crofford
Edmonton

Mr. Colby Cseke
Lethbridge

Mr. Rick Curtis
St. Albert

Ms. Lindsay Daniller
Edmonton

Mr. Michael Davenport
Fort Vermilion

Ms. Adriana Davies
Edmonton

Mr. Jack Davis
Calgary

Mr. Robert Day
Calgary

Ms. Michaella de Ruiter
Red Deer

Mr. Bill Dearborn
Medicine Hat

Mr. Scott Decksheimer
Calgary

Dr. Peter Desai
Calgary

Mr. Marcel Desjarlais
Edmonton

Ms. Lisa Devos
Edmonton

Mr. Eugene Dextrase
High Level

Ms. Jennifer Diakiw
Calgary

Ms. Bev Dick
Edmonton

Dr. Robert Diewold
Red Deer

Mr. Merv Domanko
Camrose

Mr. Nima Dorjee
Calgary

Mr. Patrick Durnin
Kathyrn

Mr. David Dusome
Edmonton

Mr. John Ellingson
Pincher Creek

Mr. Morgan Elliot
Edmonton

Mr. Jerry Ezekiel
Canmore

Mr. Aaron Falkenberg
Calgary

Mr. John Ferguson
Edmonton

Mr. Ron Findlay
Calgary

Ms. Marilyn Fisher
Medicine Hat

Ms. Gail Forsythe
Calgary

Mr. Marvin Fox
Standoff

Ms. Joy Fraser
Edmonton

Dr. Rod Fraser
Edmonton

Ms. Pat Frederickson
Edmonton

Mr. Art Froehlich
Calgary

Mr. Donald George
Vegreville

Dr. Roger Gibbins
Calgary

Mr. J.R. Giroux
Edmonton

Mr. Ross Glen
Calgary

Mr. Gerald Gordey
Edmonton

Mr. Doug Goss
Edmonton

Mr. David Gourlay
Grande Prairie

Mr. Alex Graham
Calgary

Mr. Hernan Guerrero
Calgary

Mr. Jim Gurnett
Edmonton

Ms. Marg Hallett
Innisfail

Mr. Jack Hayden
Edmonton

Ms. Tiffany Hayes
Edmonton

Mr. Henry Heinen
Lethbridge

Mr. Landon Henkelman
Red Deer

Mr. Dale Henwood
Calgary

Ms. Lili Hillman
Barrhead

Mr. Ted Hodgson
Edmonton

Dr. Robert Hollinshead
Edmonton

Mr. Jesse Hope
Alhambra

Ms. Kim Howell
Fort McMurray

Mr. Ray Huddlestone
Calgary

Ms. Emma Hulit
Warner

Mrs. Jody Hunt
St. Albert

Mr. Bill Hunter
Boyle

Mr. Colin Jackson
Calgary

Mr. David James
Edmonton

Mr. Pat James
Olds

His Worship Doug Jones
Oyen

Mr. Krishan Joshee
Edmonton

Mr. Peter Josty
Calgary

Ms. Alexandra Jurisic
Calgary

Ms. Diana Kailly
Calgary

Mr. Lyle Keewatin Richards
Red Deer

Mr. Dan Kelly
Calgary

Mr. Sean Kennedy
Red Deer

Ms. Louise Kidney
Calgary

Ms. Roseanne King
Manning

Mr. Perry Kinkaide
St. Albert

Mr. Stan Klassen
Lethbridge

Dr. Leo Klug
Edmonton

Mr. Chad Knowler
Black Diamond

Mr. Chris Kooistra
Calgary

Mr. Orest Korbutt
Edmonton

Mr. Ron Kuban
Edmonton

Ms. Maureen Kubinec
Edrnonton

Mr. Vern Kuehn
Spruce Grove

Mr. Jake Kuiken
Calgary

Mr. Gord Lambert
Calgary

Mr. Denis Lapierre
Edmonton

Ms. Erin Laughlin
Youngstown

Mr. Roy Lee
Calgary

Ms. Christine Leonard
Edmonton

Mr. Clint Levitt
Calgary

Mr. Doug Livingstone
Vermilion

Mr. Geoff Lobley
Calgary

Ms. Margaret Lounds
Calgary

Ms. Doris Ludlage
Elk Point

Mr. Leo Ludwig
Pincher Creek

Mr. Joe Lukacs
Calgary

Ms. Hilda Lupul
Airdrie

Mr. Diing Wol Mabior
Calgary

Mr. Colin MacIsaac
Calgary

Mr. Allan Mah
Edmonton

Ms. Sholeh Malek Mahdavi
Calgary

Ms. Deb Manz
Edmonton

Ms. Patricia Marck
Edmonton

Mr. Ken Mark
Spruce Grove

Mr. Dave Martens
La Crete

Ms. Berv Martin
Edmonton

Reverend Don Mayne
Edmonton

Mr. Michael McAleer
Donnelly

Ms. Elaine McCoy
Calgary

Ms. Catherine McCulloch
Medicine Hat

Mr. Douglas McDermid
Mayerthorpe

Mr. Shawn McKeown
Calgary

Ms. Val McLean
Calgary

Mr. Bob McPhee
Calgary

Mr. Gerry Meek
Calgary

Mr. Alim Merali
Edmonton

Mr. Brent Meyer
Edmonton

Inspector Tom Middleton
Edmonton

Mr. Irl Miller
Edmonton

Mr. Joshua Miller
Spruce Grove

Mr. Bill Mitchell
Peace River

Ms. Carmelita Monroy
Calgary

Mr. Osama Montasser
St. Albert

Mr. J. Sherrold Moore
Calgary

Mr. Alexander Munro
Athabasca

Mr. David Murphy
Red Deer

Mr. Bob Myroniuk
Calgary

Mr. Lal Narang
Calgary

Mr. Ruben Nelson
Lac Des Arcs

Mr. Phil Neufeld
Edmonton

Ms. Madeleine Nixon
Fort McMurray

Ms. Allison Nixon
Calgary

Ms. Barbara Olsen
Ponoka

Ms. Ruby Olson
Fort McMurray

Dr. Seamus O'Shea
Lethbridge

Mr. Jock Osler
Calgary

Mr. Fernando Pardo
Edmonton

Ms. Martha Parker
Calgary

Mr. Maury Parsons
Calgary

Dr. Mike Percy
Edmonton

Mr. Brian Peterson
Drumheller

Mr. Larry Phillips
Edmonton

Mr. Irv Pineau
Cold Lake

Ms. Audrey Poitras
Edmonton

Ms. Marie Rajic
Calgary

Mr. Riley Rattai
Red Deer

Mr. Ken Rawson
Edmonton

Mr. Cliff Reiling
Blairmore

Ms. Delta Rempel
Red Deer

Mr. Kevan Rhead
Edmonton

Ms. Janet Riopel
Edmonton

Mr. Shawn Ripley
Calgary

Ms. Melanie Robinson
Cold Lake

Mr. Dave Rodney
Calgary

Ms. June Roe
Kinuso

His Worship George Rogers
Leduc

Ms. Candace Rypien
Edmonton

Mr. Sherali Saju
Calgary

Ms. Bonnie Sansregret
Consort

Ms. Shafryne Sayani
Calgary

Mr. Wally Schroeder
La Crete

Mr. Greg Scott
Red Deer

Mr. Allan Scott
Edmonton

Mr. Glen Scott
Calgary

Ms. Marjorie Scott
Heinsburg

Ms. Mary Senecal
Calgary

Dr. Wayne Shillington
Edmonton

Mr. Lester Shore
Edmonton

His Worship Dennis Shuler
Banff

Mr. Larry Simpson
Calgary

Mr. Marc Slingerland
Lethbridge

His Worship Bill Smith
Edmonton

Mr. Cort Smith
Edmonton

Dr. Tom Snell
Calgary

Mr. Mark Solis
Calgary

Mr. Stephen Soucy
Red Deer

Ms. Jullian Spatz
Red Deer

Ms. Kelsey Speakman
Edmonton

Dr. Mathew Spence
Edmonton

Ms. Barb Spencer
Edmonton

Mr. John Squarek
Calgary

Ms. Muriel Stanley Venne
Edmonton

Ms. Claudette Stetsko
Red Deer

Ms. Melodie Stol
Blackfalds

Mr. Wyett Swanson
Provost

Mr. Million Tafesse
Calgary

Ms. Crystal Talbot
Edmonton

Mr. Everett Tanis
Picture Butte

Mr. Michael Taylor
Edmonton

Ms. Tricia Telfer
Calgary

Ms. Maryetta Thielen
Milk River

Ms. Betty Thompson
Edmonton

Mr. Dave Tuccaro
Fort McMurray

Ms. Georgine Ulmer
Calgary

Ms. Kristie Ulrich
Lethbridge

Mr. Peter Valentine
Calgary

Ms. Elvie Valeroso
Calgary

Mr. Darren Vos
Condor

Ms. Caroline Voyer
Calgary

Dr. Norman Wagner
Calgary

Mr. Bill Watkin
Edmonton

Mr. Brett Watson
Calgary

Dr. Harvey Weingarten
Calgary

Ms. Erin Welk
Calgary

Mr. Martin West
Edmonton

Mr. Neil Wilkinson
Edmonton

Mr. Darcy Will
Fort McMurray

Ms. Rosie Williams
Black Diamond

Mr. Robert Wilson
Fort McMurray

Ms. Kari Wilton
Rocky Mountain House

Ms. Janice Wing
Red Deer

Mr. Bill Winship
Sherwood Park

Mr. Myron Wolf Child
Cardston

Mr. Herman Young
Edmonton

Mr. Gerald Zagrosh
Edmonton